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SPECIAL

**POLITICAL CURRENTS IN
ANCIENT ARMENIAN**

by

Prof. N. Adontz

also

Reuben Darbinian
Dr. George P. Rice, Jr.
Prof. Richard N. Frye
Dr. H. S. Varvarian
P. K. Thomajan
George Vukelich
Moses Konjoian
Armen Saninian
Dr. E. Sarkisyanz
Yeroukhan
Richard Simonian
Luc-Andre Marcel

Poetry, Reviews, Stories, Articles

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ARMENIAN REVIEW

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SPRING, 1955

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THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST BOLSHEVISM

A. TCHILINGARIAN

The Initial Errors

During the past four years, on various occasions, our readers have heard about the American Committee which is fighting Bolshevism. They know, for instance, that this committee for one year has been maintaining a special radio station in Munich — Radio Liberation — making broadcasts to the peoples of the Soviet Union in 17 different languages, including the Armenian. They also know that this committee maintains a Scientific Institute in Munich consisting of expatriated experts who carry on research work on the various phases of life in the Soviet Union the result of which is published in special anthologies and informative periodicals. This is done in Russian, English, German and French languages, and steps have been taken to do the same in the Armenian and several other languages.

It is noteworthy that the American Committee, despite its comparatively short period of existence, since 1951, has been obliged to change names three times. First it was called "American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of Russia," but soon this name was changed to "American Committee for the Liberation of the Peoples of the Soviet Union," and before long this name in turn was changed to "American Committee for Liberation from Bolshevism."

These changes, of course, were not mere accident, nor the result of a whim. They were brought about as the direct result of the interventions of expatriated anti-soviet organizations of many nationality groups to prevent unnecessary discontent and difficulties. At the same time, it seems, it was partly due to certain transformation of

minds among the members of the American Committee.

In the initial stages, the idea uppermost in the minds of the Committee apparently was the Russian people, or Russia proper with its russianized or not altogether russianized non-russian "minorities" only which were inextricably linked with the Russian people and Russia proper. That was the reason why the first name was dedicated to the liberation of Russian peoples.

But once the American Committee started to negotiate not only with the Russians but with non-russians, it realized that the name of Russia is repellent to a large number of non-russian organizations because they saw in that name the confirmation of the domination of the Russian nation while their real aspirations were the exact opposite, namely, secession from Russia and complete political independence. The Committee thought the name Soviet would be less objectionable to the non-russians, but when that name too proved unsatisfactory both to the Russians and the non-russians, the Committee finally was obliged to adopt a neutral name which is the present name. And although this name, too, is not entirely satisfactory, the opposition to it is not as sanguine on both sides. And since the American Committee's aim is to fight against Bolshevism, the present name offers a common ground for mutual cooperation.

Without doubt, however, the name itself has played only an infinitesimal role in the current misunderstandings and disagreements between the two sides, and if we stopped on this phase of the question, it was simply to point up a development which is significant.

The causes of the difficulties encountered by the American Committee in its efforts to create a common front of those conflicting expatriated organizations were entirely different.

First of all, the American Committee itself, despite its excellent personnel and

despite their laudable motives, was not adequately prepared for its role of responsibility. The majority of its members was not sufficiently familiar with the history, the culture, and the aspirations of all the peoples of the Soviet Union, while those members who really knew Russia, that acquaintance was very one-sided, largely inspired by the idea of the Great Russia. These so-called Russian experts, few in number, had lived in Russia proper and were enamored exclusively with Russian culture, its music, theater and the arts. Having been fed constantly on Russian sources they naturally were inclined to view all problems connected with Russia's past, present and the future with the spectacles of Russian liberals.

Once the American Committee had a chance to become more acquainted with the non-russian elements of the expatriation in Europe and America the revelation was an eye opener.

At the outset, it never occurred to the American Committee that there would be serious difficulties in the formation of a common front, but the facts soon proved that the non-russian expatriates did not look upon themselves as the representatives of national minorities of "One and Inseparable Russia" only, but that they represent national majorities in their areas, their aggregate numbers no less perhaps than that of the Russians, who had a right of separate existence.

On the other hand the American Committee saw that the Russian expatriates, not even excepting the most liberals among them, were not entirely free of the notion of the "Great State" and were unwilling to recognize the non-russians' full right to self-determination.

Had the American Committee been perfectly familiar with the past history of the non-russians and their political aspirations, in all probability it would have avoided a series of errors and its efforts to form a

common front would have been more successful.

If on the one hand these errors emanated from deficient acquaintance of both past histories and present day deeply-rooted inclinations, on the other hand, they were largely the result of the extraordinary russophilism of certain members of the same Committee which in turn is the direct result of an exclusive and one-sided acquaintance with the history and the culture of Russia proper. This minority naturally could not easily shed off its pro-russian predilections. But the majority of the Committee, after a closer acquaintance with the non-russian expatriates, revised considerably its original position because, being unbiased, it could correct its errors all the more readily and could take a more impartial stand toward the non-russian elements of the expatriation.

The Hostility of Russian Liberals To Non-russian Independence

It would be wrong and at the same time unjust, however, to ascribe the failure of forming a common anti-bolshevik front to the inadequate preparation or the partiality of the American Committee. A greater share of the blame in this failure must be attributed to the expatriated organizations and their leaders, especially the Russians.

We think the time is ripe to determine these responsibilities. First let us consider the Russians. Unfortunately, the Russian anti-soviet expatriates are deeply divided among themselves, broken into many factions, and constantly at war among themselves. The only thing which unites them is the idea of "One and Indivisible Russia."

Not only the Russian monarchist, but the liberal, the democrat, and even the most rabid socialist fanatically cling to the idea of the indivisibility of the present Great Russian state, the Russian empire, to be exact.

True, on paper, the Russian liberal, the democrat and the socialist accept peoples' right to self determination but when it comes to implementing this principle in the present Russian empire they put the foot down and gang up on those non-russian nationality groups who insist on independent existence.

It is a curious fact that any non-russian nationality demand for separate existence invariably meets with the inflexible hostility of even the most liberals of the Russians. Those who pose such a demand are called contemptible "separatists," pitiful "nationalists" who tend to dismember Holy Russia, to cooperate with whom is treason against the Russian Fatherland. Even to the most liberal of them Russia is One and Indivisible because it is a historically developed state, as if the Austro-Hungarian or Ottoman Empires were not historically developed states, as if the same did not apply to the British Empire, and as if Ireland committed a crime by seceding from England.

Ironically enough, these same Russian leaders who are bent on preserving the integrity of Russia at all cost and who will not tolerate the secession of non-russians never look upon themselves as narrow-minded nationalists and it is always the political leaders of those peoples who aspire to national independence who are the chauvinists. How come the tyrannical policy of preserving the territorial integrity of Russia is a progressive measure, but restoring the independence of constituent peoples based on the principles of freedom and justice should merit the opprobrium of dismemberment?

In justice, it should be recorded here that about two years ago there was such a Russian organization which made an attempt to be more fair-minded, waived the demand for a great Russian state, and came to an agreement with independence-minded non-russian organizations for the common fight

against Bolshevism. This organization went so far as to recognize the non-russians' right to independence pending free popular elections or the decisions of respective constituent assemblies of these peoples after the overthrow of the Soviet regime.

But when it became known, the Russian journalists unleashed such a fierce persecution of those leaders who had concluded the agreement that they were morally ostracized as if they had committed a crime against the Russian nation. And the accused tried to justify their action in the Russian press protesting that they had made no concessions to the non-russians and that they would continue to defend the territorial integrity of Russia as before. This and the subsequent Ukrainian opposition, naturally, vitiated the plan for the formation of a common front to combat Bolshevism.

Moreover, to nullify the effort of non-russian national organizations, the Russians won over such non-russians who championed the idea of Russia's indivisibility, and if the latter were not organized the Russian organized them and drove them to work. Such an organization was the so-called "Union of Armenian Fighters for Freedom" which actually misled the American Committee into subsidizing it for a while. They even published a periodical with American funds but once the American Committee stopped its subsidy the paper died a natural death.

That organization, having been an artificial creation, inspired and supported by outsiders, is already defunct like all similar organizations which came to the fore ostensibly for the liberation of their peoples but in reality working for the Great Russians.

Naturally we do not expect the Russian monarchists or the fascists to relinquish their idea of One and Indivisible Russia because they do not believe either in freedom, democracy, or the principle of self-determination and they openly say so. They only

believe in force and know that the present Soviet Union was created by force and force alone will preserve the One and Indivisible Russia.

But how to explain the fanatical devotion of Russian liberals, the democrats and the socialists to the idea of Russian territorial integrity? Is it not true that they believe in the principles of freedom, democracy and self-determination, and fight for these principles insofar as they pertain to the Russian nation? Is it not true that they sincerely and without reservation defend the right to independence of those peoples who are outside the Soviet orbit. How then, when it comes to the non-russians of the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union as it is now called, the Russian liberals call them minorities although they know these peoples constitute the majority in their historic lands? How come they want to shackle these peoples to the chariot of One and Indivisible Russia? How come this incomprehensible hostility and contempt? Why should these peoples' righteous demand for separate existence be ascribed to the absurd notion that they hate the Russian people?

The Russian liberals, democrats and socialists assume a grave responsibility before history and before all the peoples of the Soviet Union, including their own, by such hostility because if they continue this intolerance the consequences will be disastrous. If they continue to resist the legitimate demands of the non-russian peoples, after the overthrow of Bolshevism, the Russian people will be forced to resort to excessive measures to keep their empire intact, forcing the subjugated peoples in turn to resort to force which might culminate into a civil war — an awful thing which, we have no doubt, both Russian and non-russian leaders abhor.

Ukrainian Extremes

A definite share of the responsibility in the failure of an anti-bolshevik common front devolves upon the non-russian ex-

expatriated organizations themselves, especially the Ukrainian extreme factions who, no less inflexible than the Russians, and at times through their provocative attitude, created an unfavorable climate right from the start. These factions undoubtedly had their effect upon the more moderate and conciliatory elements, greatly impeding the work of mutual cooperation between the Russians and the non-russians.

It must be stated however, that the Ukrainians of Tsarist Russia are comparatively more tolerant toward the Russians than those Ukrainians who have never been under Russian rule and who come from Austro-Hungarian Galicia. These are largely Catholics. Their influence is powerful, if not dominant among expatriated Ukrainian organizations. Fanatical nationalists, they push their ideas of national independence to such extremes that the impression is, to them, there is no great difference between the Bolsheviks and the Russians. They hate the Russians no less than they do the Bolsheviks and will have nothing to do with them.

This manifest hostility naturally irritates the Russians, stiffens their resistance, and makes them equally hateful of all non-russian organizations.

Fortunately, there are a sufficient number of moderate democratic organizations among the Ukrainians which, although never surrendering their ideal of complete independence, try to come to an understanding with the Russians, cultivate their friendship, and form a united front in the fight against Communism. One of these organizations two years ago came to an understanding with the non-russians in Paris which culminated in what is known as the "Paris Bloc."

Unfortunately, the efforts of the Paris bloc, supported by the American Committee, to come to an understanding with the rest of the Russians proved fruitless, and the only Russian organization which had

joined the Paris Bloc, under the pressure of the Russian press, soon cooled off and took the road to retreat.

Curiously enough, the Russian representative who had signed the Paris pact, upon his return to America, published a series of apologetic articles, trying to prove that he had made no substantial concessions to the non-russians and that he still stood firm on the idea of One and Indivisible Russia.

It is to be regretted that the Russian liberal press, instead of encouraging the single organization which had collaborated with the non-russians, on the contrary attacked it so vehemently as if its representative had committed a crime against the Russian people. This climate of intolerance created by the Russian liberals toward the question of national independence naturally retards the cause of common alignment and drives the non-russians to fend for themselves. What is worse, a good deal of the zeal of these organizations is dissipated in wasteful and injurious quarrels among themselves instead of concentrating their efforts against the Soviet tyranny.

If the Russian liberals really want to see Bolshevism overthrown they must give serious thought to this insufferable and reprehensible state of affairs and, before it is too late, revise their methods by showing a more patient, broad-minded and less chauvinistic attitude toward the national aspirations of the non-russians. Needless to say the greatest share of the responsibility in this respect devolves upon the Russian leaders themselves because the greatest and the most dominant among the nationalities of the Soviet Union are the Russians and therefore the initiative of making concessions should come from them. When this is done, we are confident, the non-russians will meet them more than half way to make the common front against Bolshevism a reality. Such a change of attitude will allay the apprehensions of Ukrainian extremists

and will clear the air of at least some of the misunderstandings and tension.

The American Committee from bitter experience saw that, at least under present conditions, it is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to bring about a common understanding between the two sides. It is natural therefore that the American Committee, unwilling to abandon the effort, is pushing forward now the idea of two centers: One for the proponents of a One and Indivisible Russia, and the other for the exponents of national independence, in the hope that both sides will continue the fight against Bolshevism of their own effort.

There are, however, vigorous objections to this plan on the part of the Russians, although not all of them, nor we think the plan will have a great appeal for the non-russians. Neither the Russians nor the non-russians want a further deepening of the rift between them, something which inevitably will follow with the creation of two anti-bolshevik centers. If not open warfare, the creation of two centers will engender mutual rivalry and silent antagonism. After the overthrow of Bolshevism these antagonisms inevitably will be transferred inside the Soviet Union with all the likelihood of creating a civil war.

But as long as they lack a common center, the American Committee can make individual assignments to these several organizations which may prove very helpful in the struggle against Bolshevism. Such a plan can be based upon practical cooperation. Both sides will be free to accept or reject any particular assignment advanced by the American Committee. It seems only such a plan will coordinate the anti-bolshevik forces of all factions. Their activities will engender closer contact with one another, a better mutual acquaintance and a better psychological climate not only for the formation of a common anti-bolshevik front but for a better mutual understanding when the Soviet is overthrown.

World Interest in the Russian Question

The overwhelming majority of expatriated organizations of the Soviet Union, both Russian and non-russian, are convinced that it will be impossible to overthrow the Soviet regime by internal revolution alone. Almost all of them feel the necessity of outside aid. Such aid is expected chiefly from the United States.

But when the Americans try to make their voice heard or take a stand in regard to those interminable feuds which have plagued the anti-soviet organizations of the expatriates, Russian anti-bolshevik political leaders resent such action as an intolerable intervention in Russian internal affairs. Some Russian leaders talk as if the overthrow of the Soviet regime is a purely Russia internal matter and that all Russians who rely on "foreign" organizations for material and political support in defence of the Russian cause are traitors to the fatherland.

It would be unjust, of course, to think that such individuals are found only among the Russian expatriates. Such thinkers unfortunately can be found also among the non-russians, including the Armenians, although in much less numbers, who consider reliance on the West in the fight against the Soviet is tantamount to national treason.

Such thinkers forget that the Soviet not only has enslaved its own peoples but today poses as a menace to the freedom and the very existence of all free nations. Therefore, the other nations have a stake in the controversy between the Russians and the non-russians and are vitally interested not only to interfere but to actively aid in the common fight. In doing so, they naturally will express their opinion and will take a definite stand not only in regard to the anti-bolshevik struggle, but also to those problems which will surely develop when the victory is won, namely, when the Soviet regime is overthrown.

Moreover, the free nations which headed by the United States will lend their assistance in the liberation of Soviet-enslaved peoples, cannot shun one basic and vitally important aim which is essential not only to their interests but the interests of all mankind, namely, the insuring of a lasting world peace. And this aim can be achieved only when following conditions are met.

1 — To recognize and to enforce recognition of all peoples' absolute right to self determination, whether great or small.

2 — Justice to all nations, whether great or small, by enabling them to resolve their territorial disputes or other outstanding issues by peaceful means and on a basis of equality.

3 — Never to permit a powerful great nation to impose its will upon small weak nations but to enable the latter to exercise their right to free self-determination without any external pressure.

4 — Never to tolerate the creation of preconditions for the establishment of a new type of dictatorship after the overthrow of the Soviet regime, always bearing in mind that countries which have been under Communist tyranny for long years offer a fertile soil for the establishment of a new type of Fascism or Nazism.

We have no doubt that the American Committee which consists of individuals who are imbued with the ideals of freedom and democracy has been pursuing and will continue to pursue these basic principles in its effort to help liberate the Soviet-enslaved peoples from the Communist yoke.

In the opinion of many there is no basic difference in point of liberation between the Soviet and the Tsarist regimes. Such thinkers fail to remember that the Tsarist despotism was never a world menace and never threatened the freedom of the entire globe. The Tsarist Government neither maintained standing armies larger than all the rest of the world nor directed auxiliaries in the form of fifth columnists in foreign

countries to bore from within. For this reason the rest of the countries did not particularly care whether or not a Tsarist type of tyranny prevailed in Russia, while today all the nations of the world are interested in the overthrow of the Soviet regime because that regime is a menace to their freedom both from without and from within.

This is the reason why, if for the revolutionaries of yesteryear the overthrow of the Tsarist regime was an internal matter to be resolved only by internal agencies or movements, for the expatriates of today fighting Communism the overthrow of the Soviet regime is not a mere internal matter but no less an external problem. Consequently, the solution of that problem is a right and a duty which devolves not only upon the Russian and non-Russian expatriates of the Soviet Union but upon all anti-communist elements of the world as well.

Therefore it is wrong for all those expatriates who demand and expect all sort of moral and material aid from the West and particularly the United States but become deeply disturbed or vigorously protest whenever the Europeans and the Americans, dictated by their convictions and interests, express an opinion or take a definite stand in regard to these interminable quarrels and wranglings between the Russians and the non-Russians.

It is difficult to understand just why the free West, America in particular, should not have an equal voice in all the issues which pertain to the fight against Bolshevism and the situation which will evolve after the overthrow of the Soviet regime when these questions have become vital issues for the entire world?

Some will reason, what sense is there in expending so much time and energy in the solution of problems which may arise after the overthrow of Bolshevism when the liberated peoples will themselves settle these problems on the spot without regard

to the opinions of the expatriates and the rest of the world.

This way of reasoning is equally fallacious.

First, the free world will neither want nor will be able to take the role of a mere observer in regard to such a development. Inevitably it will have a voice in the future of Soviet Russia if for no other reason than the establishment of a permanent world peace and the prevention of a new world menace.

Second, the role of the Russian and non-Russian expatriates in the life of their peoples will not be something altogether to be despised as some think. If in the past, in the overthrow of Tsarism, the role of Russian revolutionaries was great, even fateful, the role of the expatriates in a future Russia may be even greater and far more fateful. And this is why.

In Tsarist days the public in Russia was organized independently of the Government. There were countless societies and organizations which not only were independent of the governmental control, but were not subject to the Tsarist rule and even opposed it. These were non-revolutionary organizations, recognized by the law, which operated openly and freely. We say nothing of the great network of revolutionary organizations which operated underground, right under the nose of the Government. These organizations could easily take over in case of a change of government.

But today, under the Soviet regime, no such organizations exist inside the Soviet Union: the opposition has been liquidated and the only link between the people is the Communist rule. Destroy that rule and there will be no organization left which is qualified to take over, there will be chaos.

In a situation so unprecedented it is very natural that the expatriated intelligentsia which returns to the fatherland, whether it wants or not, will be forced to take a hand in the life of the people not only in the formation of a new government but in regard to its future policy. Having been imbued with free democratic ideals in the free world and being closely acquainted with their methods and way of life, it will be forced to assume vitally important and decisive responsibilities in the task of self-determination.

This puts an added responsibility on the intellectuals of the expatriation transcending their present mission of fighting Bolshevism. They must not only continue the fight against the Soviet but they must also prepare themselves as best they can for the important role which they will be called upon to play when the fight is won.

It is this fact which gives the struggle a unique significance and makes it imperative for the leaders of the expatriation not only to exercise a greater degree of tolerance, harmony and mutual cooperation, but also to come to a common understanding on all those basic issues which inevitably will arise in their mother countries after the downfall of the Soviet regime.



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POLITICAL CURRENTS IN ANCIENT ARMENIA

PROF. N. ADONTZ

For centuries it has been the custom to slander the Armenian nation for its presumable lack of public-spiritedness. Internal conflicts and clashes in public activity are always characterized as the result of antagonistic spirit. The reputation for disunity has been regarded as an indigenous wrinkle on our aged brow, the basic cause of our fatal misfortunes. It is this distracted, and especially conflicting and contradictory activity which has led us to the straits of danger and bitterness.

Thus thought the ancients, and following their example, the new are doing the same thing.

The Armenian nobility, the foremost power of the land, has been presented to us by the ancient chroniclers in such black outlines that one can only moan at the picture. Disunion, discord, dissension, treason and machinations of all kinds, having for their basis selfishness, ambition, talebearing and the baser tendencies, but never a public-spirited upward flight — this is the picture of the early period when the Armenian Nakharars (the feudal lords) held the power.

Partisan pens would have us believe insistently that the Armenian princes were so weak-minded that they preferred the foreign satrap to their own king or to them the Chunaks and the Brkisho's were more venerable than the Nersesses and the Sahaks.

Exaggeration is never a virtue especially in a chronicler who is expected to be im-

partial and a thinking man. The ancestors of the Armenians have often sinned against justice by having distorted the contemporary facts and events. Due to their one-sided and false exposition the past Armenian history has often been presented as a circus of individual wontonness, devoid of all ideological content.

Of course we cannot expect of the ancients such an appraisal of past events which the present day analytical mind demands. Neither the views of the chroniclers nor their recommendations can be regarded as mandatory for us. Even their plain declarations have no more value than the result of partisan living.

If we strip the verified facts of history of their illusion which is the property of the chroniclers' personal views and follow up the development of successive events, we shall see that these very events point up two basic modes of political activity, two long range directions stretched over the entire centuries. There was no contrast of patriots and traitors, nor good and evil forces which, facing each other, were fighting against each other on the lines which they had chosen. They were two major factions which strove toward the same goal through different roads, segments of the same body seized by the same political passion.

What was their idealistic aim?

My question is not merely of theoretical interest. It seems these political factions of ancient times are a sort of historic path

along which lines our present day political parties are finding their alignments.

It means the Armenian national mind toward the great political issue has remained true to the tradition of antiquity. This loyalty is never consciously exercised in the present instance, namely, it is not the result of acquaintance with the old paths. It is the similarity of the circumstances which have given birth to identical psychologies, identical political dispositions and policies, both the old and new times.

We have a long period of past history which, in its political struggles, is very similar to our comparatively fresh emancipatory movement, and instructive in many respects.

Toward the middle of the ninth century the Armenian political dream became a reality. A part of Armenia, a small but highly important part, was liberated from the Arab yoke.

The blood which the Armenians shed for the last time in defence of the Arsacid (Arshakouni) throne, was separated by exactly four centuries from the day when the lost crown decorated the head of the Bagratid Prince.

Ashot had a right to celebrate his victory as early as 861 A.D.

Four centuries of peace was not a golden era of sweet sleep. It was a period of uninterrupted wars, internal disturbances, and a stormy era of rise and fall. What were the active leading forces on the scene, and how were they alined toward the goal to be reached? They were different from the present day forces, much the same as the structure of Armenian public life differed between the two.

It is well known that the reigning regime in ancient Armenia was feudalism, known by the Armenians as the system of the Nakharars, namely, the clan or patriarchal dynasties.

Many are of the opinion that the system of the Nakharars was a great evil for Ar-

menia. This view is contrary to the truth. To think like this means to impose on history, to sin against the truth and to trample under the historic outlook. Feudalism was accepted in the vast empire of Iranian culture and really constituted the basis of its social and political organization. In the opinion of authoritative Iranologists, the force which created not only the Iranian states, but the very Iranian civilization, was the system of feudalism. With its dissolution came to an end that high class Persian civilization which had started and flourished during the reign of the Achimenean, Arsacid and Sassanian Dynasties. It was the Persian nobility which created and preserved that civilization; and when that nobility was ended by the Arabs their handiwork collapsed with them.

Armenia was in an identical situation. As long as the dynasties of the Nakharars stood, there was political life in the land. With their downfall the doors of Armenia were opened to the imperialist hordes and the adventurous marauders. The Arabs easily conquered those parts of Armenia where the nobility had almost disappeared, having been absorbed in the body of the Byzantine Empire.

There was a time when the peasant Armenia of today was the most aristocratic country in the world. How many tens of great or small princely families were perched on the mountains of Armenia! Each prince had his impregnable fortress and his cavalry which is known by the number of its mounted warriors. The cavalry consisted almost exclusively of the sons or close relatives of the princely families. The Armenian words Azatani (freemen), Voryar (men) and Manktik (children) are the chroniclers' way of referring to the sons of the free class.

The cavalry, the Armenian knighthood analogous to the medieval West, was the only standing military power against the external enemies and the only protector of

the Armenian peasantry. By virtue of this calling the Armenian Nakharars can atone for all their sins against the charges of oppression advanced by contemporary exacting critics.

In the eyes of the ancients the Nakharars were guardian angels of the nation. When the greater part of these patriarchal dynasties fell victim of Arab perfidy, this is what a contemporary chronicler says about them: "The inhabitants of the land were subjected to the ravages of fire and sword, as if trampled underfoot by the swine, the land of the Armenians was stripped of its tribal families, betrayed like sheep in the midst of wolves."

This touching comparison in itself is enough to establish the historic role of the Nakharars. The Nakharar was the land's leader, without whom, like the flock without the shepherd, the sheep fall prey to the wolves. He was the guardian and protector of the people without whom it smoulders like a scorching fire, even as the sheaf are trampled under the swine's feet.

Thanks to this perpetually armed nobility Armenia never reached the day when it fell prostrate before the victorious enemy as we saw it after the disappearance of the Nakharars. As long as he survived Armenia was never conquered in the full sense of the word. Rome, Persia, the Arab and Byzantium can never boast that the Armenia of the Nakharars was ever conquered and converted into a province of theirs. For centuries the Armenian feudal lords managed to fight and to preserve their position and freedom. Their enemies, after bitter and disastrous experience, got used to the idea of relaxing their pretensions. A yearly tribute and military aid — these were the only two modest commitments with which the Nakharars bought the country's freedom from the external enemy.

After the downfall of the Arsacids "the Armenian kingdom fell to the Nakharars", says the chronicler.

The duties of the Armenian king toward the Persian monarch, therefore, were performed by the Nakharars. "The treasure went to the Persian Court," writes the chronicler, "but it was the Nakharars who led the Armenian cavalry to the wars."

The Nakharars are willing to pay the Persian Court the customary annual tribute but they never surrendered their cavalry to the foreigner. To surrender the cavalry meant to be disarmed which was tantamount to committing suicide.

When the Arabs invaded Armenia in the Seventh Century the Armenian princes heroically resisted them by force of arms.

Prince Theodorus of the Rushtounis, a man endowed with extraordinary farsightedness, sensing the invincibility of the new imperialists, deemed it wise to conclude a friendship pact with them on condition that the most important trust of the land, the local autonomy, should not suffer but should be kept intact. After this the Armenians never had an opportunity for concluding such a favorable treaty. "For three years. I will take no tribute from you, and then only when you deliver by sworn oath, as much as you are willing. You supply me an auxiliary force of 15000 cavalry and food supply to the account of my court. I will not send your cavalry against the Assyrians, but elsewhere, wherever I command, let them be ready. I will not let a single Amira or a Tadjik officer out of the forts, not even a single mounted troop. If an enemy enters Armenia or if Rome attacks your land, I will come to your assistance as much as you wish."

This lenient and conciliatory spirit on the part of the Arabs was prompted by great military wisdom. To win the sympathy of an Armenia which was comparatively strong militarily, and to pit their strength against the Byzantines, their real enemy, was a wise step on the part of the Arabs.

The Armenian Nakharars were not igno-

rant in regard to the political aims of their powerful neighbors. Realizing the significance of statehood the Nakharars strove to make their importance count and to profit from the mutual hostilities of their enemies. The Armenians were not silent observers in the contest between east and west but forcibly interfered in their clashes.

The extent to which the Armenian participation is held in attested by the past history and the recollections of yesterday which still are fresh in our minds.

The value of Armenian military power is reflected in a magnificent anecdote which has come down from antiquity. Vassak Mamikonian, the commander of the Armenian cavalry who for long years had been a thorn on the side of the Persian king, finally falls captive to the Persians. King Sapor (Shapouh) asks the Armenian general: "You fox, you were the one who caused us so much trouble, for years you decimated the Persians and now you shall die the death of a fox."

And Vasak, the brave general, now a captive, proudly replies to the mighty King: "You see me now a little man physically but you fail to see my greatness. Up until now I was a lion for you, but now I have become a fox. But as long as I was Vassak I was a giant, one foot planted on one mountain, and the other on another mountain. When I leaned on the right foot the right mountain levelled to the ground, when I leaned on the left, the left mountain came down."

Furious with rage, the proud King demands an explanation and the fearless prince explains to him that the two mountains are Persia and Rome, and it is their fate which depended on him.

Bodily small, yet a giant, Vassak is the embodiment of the militant spirit of the Nakharars.

This legendary anecdote shows that the Armenian princes were supremely conscious of their importance in international

encounters. And yet, what was their general direction between the two hands of the clock? Did they have a specific policy of their own, or did they merely sway between the whims of their neighbors?

Admittedly the feudalistic order had a bad reputation everywhere. The Armenian system of the Nakharars which was founded on feudalism, naturally was not exempt of its faults and bad reputation.

Of course, among the great of the Armenian Nakharars, there were those whose mental outlook did not go beyond the limit of their own vision and for whom the boundaries of the fatherland stopped where their personal estates came to an end. But the majority of the Nakharars do not come within this category. The Armenian nobility, as a class, not only was endowed with a high degree of patriotism and high national aspirations, but they also possessed the necessary devotion and the vigor to press the realization of their aspirations.

The love of the fatherland and the nation is a natural feeling which stems from the nature of man, closely linked, at the same time, with a man's personal interest; and only men of blemished character are devoid of that feeling, as well as the feeling of self respect. True patriotism had no other end but to insure for the fatherland such conditions which will enable it to develop freely, and to bring its small bouquet of flowers to the wreath of human civilization.

The most important precondition for unfettered development is political independence. Human history is made of this perpetual struggle for freedom.

The Armenian Nakharars, too, had an unquenchable thirst for national identity. At no time has so much effort been exerted, or so much blood shed, to relax the foreign yoke, or to shed it off once and forever, as was done in the period of the Armenian Nakharars.

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the leading forces, determined by two different paths, which led to their political goal. The bloody road to rebellion and the more cautious path of discretion presented two different modes of activity, to different banners. The active forces of Armenia were rallied around these two banners, having for their leaders two famous princely homes.

The flagbearers of one faction were the daring Mamikonian princes; the other were the sober-minded Bagratids. Theoretically the two factions were not in contradiction with each other, but on practical grounds they clashed with each other with disastrous consequences. From here stems the tragic hostility between the Mamikonians and the Bagratids. The history of the period of the Nakharars is essentially the history of these two dynasties.

It will not suffice to portray their essential character. I would like to make a brief survey of all the notable political events which took place in Armenia from the downfall of the Arsacids to the rise of the Bagratids. Such a survey will convince everyone of the true role of the two families in Armenian history and point up the true basis of their domestic and political resistance.

The Armenians were still in mourning. Scarcely recovered from the stunning blow which the Persians had delivered to the Arsacid throne, the responsible class strove to restore the lost throne. The wars of Vardan and Vahan were the first attempt which proved fruitless. The political nature of these wars is beyond doubt, although cloaked under the garb of the clergy. That false cloak which holy hands have spread before us with such meticulousity and religious zeal, is automatically torn at the trial of Vassak to show the sublimity of the accused man at the very moment of his fall, when he rises up and tears the mask and disengages the truth from the clutches of terrible passions.

The Persians, with a unique regard for Armenian national sensitivity, had turned over the governorship of Armenia — Armenian title Marzpan — to Vassak, the Prince of Siuni, the most capable of the Nakharars. The idea of rebellion against Persia was started in his reign. Subsequent history gives us the right to think that there was the finger of Byzantium in this rebellion, perhaps the real instigator.

The first years of the accession of Yezdegerd the Persians had raided the Imperial lands contrary to the Treaty of 422. It was only the pacifism of Emperor Theodosius which prevented this unlawful invasion from its serious consequences. Vassak's plan could have been inspired by Byzantium as a demonstration or a measure of counter-revenge against the Persian insult.

Emperor Theodosius was a participant of the movement and promised the Armenians his support. Having first made secure his flank on the Greek side, Vassak made similar agreements with his immediate neighbors—the Georgians, the Aghuans and the Aghdtnik, to shed off the Persian yoke by a concerted effort. However, Emperor Theodosius died on June 28 of 450 and the plan was suspended in the air since Emperor Marcian was unwilling to disturb the peace in the east on account of the Armenians, especially since the Empire was threatened by the religious quarrels of Chalcedon.

Under the circumstances, there was nothing left but to resign from, or postpone, the plan of rebellion. Discretion dictated this strategic retreat, so that the holy cause might not suffer from reckless adventurism.

Unfortunately, it was too late. The agitated mob had gone too far and already had spilled blood. The hotheads had grievously offended the Persian clergy and had committed a state crime in destroying the Persian sacred shrines to the sun and throwing the holy fire into the water. The conflagration already was started.

At the head of the rioters was the brave house of the Mamikonians. "All such ventures could be consummated only through the participation of the Mamikonian tribe, and without their leadership nothing could be accomplished in the land of Armenia," writes the Mamikonian historian.

Thus, the covenant of the Nakharars was broken. The rebels were divided into two camps: one camp wanted to go through with it; the other, foreseeing the disastrous results, preferred to desist and forget the whole affair. The leaders of the first camp were Vardan Mamikonian and Nershapouh Artzruni; the second were led by Vassak Siuni and the lord of the Bagratids.

There can be no word of either apostasy or treason. Both sides equally had in mind the public interest. They differed only in their respective views, both with their dubious advantages.

The plan of rebellion was based on the expected aid from the West, a futile hope because the Emperor, with no less hesitation than the Persians, had stripped the Arsacids of the Crown in the Armenian segment of Byzantium. It was frivolous to hope that the same Emperor would help the Armenians recover their lost independence in the Persian segment.

The position of the Covenanters was no less advantageous. A people which had been so apathetic to the last groans of the Arsacids was incapable of, and impotent to rise to such political heights. The powers of the Armenian could not dare the might of a great state.

The violators of the Covenant, having been aroused of their dream, saved the country from a major disaster, but those who were loyal to the Covenant were martyred, knowingly embraced death, so that they could become immortals and serve as an example to future generations, and a grim warning to the tyrant that tyranny, after all, has a limit, and that the Arme-

nian people would not willingly wallow at the bottom of abject slavery.

This turbulent condition continued for about ten years until the return of the captive Nakharars. In less than twenty years the land again was in turmoil, for no specific reason except the rekindling of old wounds. The contemporary historian complains that "the bandits, the useless men, the parasites, and the families of ill repute" were being pushed to the fore, while men of quality and merit were ingored.

Such evil cannot be considered a serious cause for taking grave political measures. It seems the talebearer was again the false friend of the West.

The Armenian grandees, the heartsick princes, assembled around Catholicos Giout, are conferring on the state of affairs and they find no other remedy except "to solicit aid and to rebel. They sent secret messengers once, and twice, to Leo the King of the Greeks who, although volunteering to help them, delayed the hour, and their plans were brought to naught."

Leo was the successor of Marcian who reigned 457 to 474. If the new uprising which broke out in 482 was in process of readiness in the days of Leo, it means that it was really nothing new but the old fire which was ignited in 451 and was still smouldering.

It's the same old parties in operation, the same two lines of thinking. The ring-leader of one is the Mamikonian family surrounded by former sympathizers — the tribes of Arsharouni, Vahevouni and Balouni. In the opposite camp stand the Gadisho, Makhaz, the Prince of Khorkhounis and a follower of Vassak, and Prince Gdeon of Siuni. Like Vassak, Gadisho Makhaz too, who has been subjected to the same black fate and has been cursed by generations, is completely innocent. Gadisho personally tasted the bitterness of the preceding events, the memory of the innocent blood which had been shed was still fresh in his

mind. He could truthfully abhor fresh convulsions which would prove disastrous for the country.

It must be admitted that, after the Vardanantz War, the Persians made all kinds of concessions to the Armenians. By order of the Court, the new Governor General (Marzpan) Adrormizd, had proclaimed religious amnesty, "each man is free to worship whatever he wishes." Pardon was granted to all fugitives and political criminals, with the exception of those who were arrested and most of whom were set free. "And he commanded to lighten the taxes of the land, and the cavalry quota at the service of the Court for the time being."

After such a tolerant policy, to raise new troubles and to disturb the peace would seem senseless.

Many were of the opinion that the new demonstrations were the work of the restive Mamikonians. "He (Vahan) could not stand still. They reminded the Persians that all of his ancestors, one by one, had brought turbulence, destruction and death to the land of the Persians. It is the same trouble makers, they said, who are causing this present commotion."

Vahan was the son of Vardan's brother Hmayyak who had fallen in battle during the Vardanantz War. It is quite possible that Vahan was not wholly exempt of the spirit of family revenge. "Among my fathers I remained a child," Vahan says, "I know neither their exploits with which the land of Persia is full, nor was I a part of their crimes."

Could it be that, by these words, the historian is trying to expurgate his hero of those lingering doubts that he launched his rebellion in order to avenge the death of his relatives?

True, the rattle of Vahan's arms did not enjoy the same popularity as Vardan's but his motives were just as exalted and noble and free of selfishness. The fact of the

matter is, what was tolerable for Gadisho and similar princes was intolerable for the Mamikonian braves. When Vahan's followers proposed that he head the rebellion, promising him the support of the Georgians and the Huns, the Mamikonian Prince replied: "The power and the valor of the Persians I know well, as well as the weakness and the perfidy of the Romans (Byzantines). You and I know from experience how they perjured themselves to our people. As to the king of the Georgians and the Huns, of whom you speak, the Georgians themselves are a small country and their cavalry is small in numbers, but the Huns, who knows? will they come or not? But more than anyone else you yourselves are men of duplicity, you are liars and undependable."

Chastened by this stinging rebuke his conversants replied: "All that you have said is true and just. But our hope rests neither in Rome nor in Huns but in the mercy of God through the intercession of Saint Gregory and in the death of our ancestors who, through their martyrdom, became worthy of our Savior Jesus Christ, and lastly in our own death, for we would rather die than to see each day the desecration of our church and the Christians."

The Mamikonians were the inspiration of the rebel camp. Logic has no meaning in the pen of the chronicler unless to portray the revolutionary temper of the Mamikonian Prince. Vahan rebelled and for two years he successfully met the Persian pursuit. King Feruz was killed in his expedition against the Huns in 484 and his successor Valarsaces (Vagharsh) made peace with the rebels, putting the blame on the arrogance of his predecessor.

"We rebelled," says Vahan on the day of victory, not because we knew we could stand against the Persians, for we know our weakness and our sufferings and we also know the numbers and the power of the

Persian might, but because we put death before all things and we are willing, and even more happy that we would die a better death."

These are beautiful words, becoming a clergyman, but not those of a political leader. By these words the religious author wants to characterize the faction whose leader was the Mamikonian family. Vahan was victorious and won the post of Governor General (Marzpan) and after him his brother Vard.

The opposing faction could restrain the emotional outburst of the victory and could justify its conservatism by pointing out that, after the victory, the Armenians did not gain very much more than what they already had before the rebellion.

It would be extravagant vanity to ascribe Vahan's victory to his arms alone. The intrigues surrounding the throne and the danger of imminent war with Byzantium forced the Persian Court to pacify Armenia as soon as possible.

As a matter of fact war broke out in the days of Valarsaces' successor Kavadh which lasted for a whole century with periodic interruptions. This period is instructive in that it brought the Armenian political leaders to their senses in regard to the Christian West. The disillusionment was so great that it unified the Mamikonians and the Bagratids in their resistance against the Imperial encroachments.

In the days of Justinian, and through his order, Byzantine Armenia was subjected to a radical transformation. The system of the Nakharars was abolished. The five Nakhararates of Southern Armenia, independent principalities which had been recognized by the treaty of 298, lost their identity for good. The whole country, together with Lesser Armenia, was divided into new administrative units which were called First, Second, Third and Fourth Armenias. The capital of the first was

Theodosiopolis, the second Sebastia, the third Melitine, and the fourth Nupergert or Martiropol, the present day Mufarzin. Each government was headed by a common officer called Comes (Coms) or Count.

In those days the last scions of the Arsacids still lived in Karin. Noted was a man named Artavan who later crossed to Byzantium where he made a great name for himself. Contiguous with the Arsacids were the Bagratids of Siper and the Mamikonians of Taiq.

The presence of three noted Nakhararates on the border of the major states was pregnant with surprises. Princely rivalries and the perfidious policy of the major powers created an explosive climate. The gold mines of Siper offered a scandalous bone of contention for the neighboring princes. Local clashes in this connection soon assumed a political character. An appointee of the Emperor named Akaki (os) who was an Armenian, having his eye on the gold mines, killed its owner Prince Hamazasp and seized the treasure. This man who, although in the service of the foreigner, at least did not try not to harm his kinsmen, was positively intolerable and was punished for his crime, being killed at the hands of the Armenians.

A new officer came from Byzantium by the name of Sitta who was a distinguished soldier. He too fell by the sword of the Armenians. The third officer who succeeded Sitta, named Booz (es), personally knew the father of the abovementioned Artavan, Prince Hovnan Arsacid, whom he summoned under the pretext of negotiations and killed him perfidiously.

Hovhan was accomplished by his son-in-law Prince Vassak. Probably he was the grandson of Vahan's brother Vassak and son of the same Grigor who went to the aid of King Valarsaces at the behest of Vahan. Vassak, sensing the trap which was being set for them, advised his father-in-law

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not to go but Hovnan would not listen to him and fell victim of his naivete and Byzantine perfidy. But the Mamikonian Prince was saved by flight.

The Imperial officer's inhuman conduct filled the cup of bitterness. The Armenian princes already were out of patience with Justinian's policy. The spokesman of this general discontent was Vassak Mamikonian. Heading a delegation he presented himself to King Chosroes of Persia and explained to him the dangerous consequences of the Imperial policy. He advised him to declare war on Byzantium before it was too late, promising him the support of the Armenians. And the same great Christian Emperor in whose name, and in reliance of him, only yesterday the Armenians had shed their blood, was being upbraided as an enemy.

The warlike Persian King was looking for an excuse to mobilize his army and presently the war was on. The universal plague frustrated the success of Chosroes' arms. The Byzantine army marched to Dovin the capital of Persian Armenia. This brought new disillusionments to the Armenians. Vassak and Artavan, the leaders of the movement, were forced to make peace with the Emperor and entered his service. Military operations came to an end in 543 only to resume at the earliest opportune moment.

In 572 Vardan and Vard, the sons of the same Vassak, killed the Persian Governor General Suren in Dovin, thus avenging the death of their elder brother Manuel whose murder was ascribed to Suren. Once again the peace of the land was disturbed. Meanwhile King Gourgen of Georgia rose against the Persians, having enlisted the aid of the mountain tribes.

Without doubt, behind this vast movement was hidden the sinister figure of the Emperor. Justinian's wars came to an end with the peace treaty of 526 one of whose

provisions stipulated that the Imperial Government would pay to the Persians an annual tribute of 500 liters of gold, 30,000 pounds, for a period of fifty years.

Justinian was looking for an opportunity to break this treaty and be rid of the onerous tribute. The stirrings of Christian Armenians and the Georgians offered him this opportunity.

When the Persian Ambassador presented himself for the annual tribute Justinian observed that "a friendship based on money alone is not commendable," and instantly raised the significant question of the Armenian rising. The Ambassador replied that although there had been disturbances the order is restored now.

The Emperor who was more cunning than astute now declared that "he is ready to defend the rebellious Armenians and will never forgive any tyranny on them as long as they adhere to the Christian faith."

The wise Ambassador whose name was Sepoukht, himself a Christian, and probably an Assyrian if not an Armenian, argued that even the interests of Christianity demand abstention from wars, because, in the ensuing encounters, the greatest harm will come to the Christians since their country will become the arena of war. He also reminded the Emperor very delicately that the issue of the war is not yet known, something which does not depend on men's will.

Sepoukht's words are a lesson in wisdom, something which we the romantic dreamers needed only yesterday, as well as the doubtful defenders of Christianity and the Armenians.

The war was started but the Emperor soon was forced to ask for an armistice. During the negotiations it came to light that, at least in the opinion of the Persians, the cause of the Armenian rebellion was the Byzantine intrigues.

King Vormizd of Persia fell victim to a

palace revolution. He was a Turk on his mother's side, ruthless and uncouth, hateful even to his closest friends who killed him. Bahram Chopin, the scion of either a Pahlav or Parthian dynasty, tried to seize the throne and restore the Arsacid dynasty. He might have succeeded were it not for the inopportune intervention of the West. Maurice found it expedient to support the candidacy of Vornizd's son Chosroes and put him on the throne.

The Armenians took part in Chopin's rebellion. Chopin issued a call to the Armenians to rise and "overthrow the universal scourge, the Sassanian Dynasty." The rebellious Prince promised the Armenians their independence and took an oath to restore the boundaries of their ancient kingdom as far as Kapkoh (Caucasus) mountains and the Gate of Aghuan (Derpent), as far as Arouastan and Nisibis.

The offer was tempting. The Armenian princes who were looking for an opportunity to rise against the Persian despot accepted the call. The leader once again was the Mamikonian family in the person of Commander Mushegh.

The Armenian historian exonerates Mushegh, trying to make it appear that it was through his aid that the Persians overthrew Chopin. But according to the information of the Persians Mushegh joined the rebels. That was the reason why after the war the Armenian General was summoned to the Court for questioning or a severe rebuke. Mushegh went to the Court accompanied by 2,000 horsemen. The King ordered that Mushegh disarm before making his appearance. Mushegh became suspicious and boldly replied: "From my childhood I have been fed at the table of kings, my grandfathers and my ancestors, and now I have come to the King's Court. I have never taken off my arms even at a festival in my own home. Does it become me to suspect the perfidy of the Persians?"

Saying it, the Armenian general withdrew, without seeing the King. The Persian King sent men after him, "his solemn oath sealed with the salt", in sign of his friendship, realizing that the Mamikonian lion was always dangerous when discontented. This incident reveals beautiful lines in the character of Mamikonian princes.

After his accession to his ancestral throne Chosroes in 591 concluded a peace treaty with his benefactor Marcian conceding to him the greater part of Armenia and retaining only Dovin, Siunik, and Vaspourakan. Even the peace of these warring powers was disastrous to the Armenians no less than their hostility. As now, so in the past the mighty powers fought and embraced one another on the corpses of the Armenians.

The Christian Emperor was kindly inclined toward the Armenians as long as Armenia was held by the Persians. Once he occupied the Armenian territories he changed his tune. The Armenians ascribed to Emperor Marcian a hideous indictment addressed to Chosroes. "We have among us an untoward and wayward nation (referring to the Armenians) who muddy the waters. But come, let's get rid of them. I will assemble those in my domains at Thrace and you send yours to the east. If they die we shall have as many less enemies, if they kill they will kill our enemies and we shall live in peace. For as long as they remain in their land there will be no rest for us."

It is difficult to believe that the Emperor had fallen so low in morality as to write such a letter. Execrable plans don't love the light but are born and mature in darkness. The Armenian rumor, however, reflects the real truth.

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had mobilized the Armenian forces in their section into Thrace to fight their enemies.

Under the circumstances, the Armenian leaders were forced to fight both against the Persians and the Greeks. In the Persian sector they killed the tax collector and seized his loot. "We seized this treasure and we shall use it to fight against both kings (Greek and Persian) in order to recover our land by force of arms."

Among those who thought like this were Mamak and Gagik Mamikonians.

The same discontent also broke out in the Greek sector. The Emperor wanted to send the Armenian cavalry to the Thracian front, headed by the leaders of two noted and influential princely families, Sahak Mamikonian and Sumbat Bagratouni. The princes took counsel and decided to revolt. "They wanted to abandon the service of the Greek King and set up a king of their own lest they perished in the land of the Thracians and preferred to remain in their own land and die there if they must."

The exalted patriotism of the Armenian princes is also attested by foreign sources.

Sahak Mamikonian obeyed the Emperor's command but Sumbat Bagratouni turned back and headed the rebels. It was he who killed Hovhan the Patrician, the Governor General of the Greek sector in 591. The exponent of Mamikonian dispositions was Hamazasp Mamikonian who joined the Greek general Heraclius and was opposed to the rebellion. From this moment begins the Mamikonian proclivity toward the west and the Bagratid sympathy toward the east.

Senator Doment, sent from the capital to investigate Sumbat's audacious act, seized the latter and took him to the Emperor. To punish the rebel prince the Emperor threw him into the arena to be devoured by the beasts but the Armenian brave deprived him of this pleasure. The Greek historian testifies that Sumbat was miraculously saved from the bloody contest. The Armenian

historian explains this miracle. The desperate prince knocks out the bear with his fists, grabs the mad bull by the horns and breaks him, springs on the back of the lion and chokes him with his fingers. The mob, the Empress first of all, at sight of this unusual valor, shout for his freedom and the Empress invites the dusty prince to the palace.

It is this giant's offspring which one day was to inherit the Armenian throne. Sumbat did not stay with the Emperor and when the chance came he entered the service of Chosroes who appointed him Governor General (Marzpan) first over Georgia and then Armenia. This office was held by his son Varaz-Tirots and the latter's son Sumbat.

The Arabs conquered Iran and with it a part of Armenia. After swaying back and forth temporarily the Bagratids stopped on the original political line which they had chosen in the days of the Persians. The Arabs, unfamiliar with the ways of the Nakharars, at first tried to make an end of their dynasties by force of arms but soon they were forced to adopt a middle way. The discretion and the caution of the Bagratid princes restrained the Arab barbarism and Ashot Vasakian was appointed Prince of Princes in 732.

The authority of the Mamikonians was on the decline. The rise of the Bagratids not only signified the defeat of the opposing party but was a heavy blow to the Mamikonian name. The Armenian cavalry whose hereditary commanders were the Mamikonian princes now passed to the Bagratids.

Their tribal vanity wounded, the two Mamikonian brothers, Grigor and David, tried to seize the priority from Ashot the Bagratid. The latter, however, had a powerful patron in the person of Murvani, the candidate to the Caliph's throne. Scarcely had he seized the power, Grigor had to

give way to Ashot at the command of Murvani. This attempt on the part of the Mamikonians cost them heavy, ending in the death of David.

With the death of Murvani in the middle of the eighth century the Ommayad Dynasty came to an end, ceding the power to the Abbasids. Taking advantage of the confusion the Mamikonians tried to free Armenia of the Arabs. The spirit of the movement was Grigor Mamikonian. However, without Ashot's consent who was the responsible lord of the land the movement was doomed, and consequently, they tried to win him over. The two factions again clash and it is the most dramatic pages of Armenian history unfolding before us which shall ever remain fresh in our memory and consciousness.

I feel constrained to quote here Ashot's advice to the rebels: "Oh brethren, I don't think this is the work of wise heads but it is the wrong advice. For our numbers are diminishing under the oppression of Ishmael and we cannot match their armies nor raise our country against the dragon. But if you will listen to my advice, do not do this thing and force them to take away from us our God, our vineyards, our woods and our fields."

Here is a plain and clear advice but Grigor Mamikonian's followers who belong to the opposite faction would not accept this sound advice but threaten: "If you do not join us there will be nothing left of you or of your soldiers. This plight of our land is more than we can bear."

Of course, it was not this despairing cry which forced Ashot to join the rebels. Prince Grigor Mamikonian concentrated his forces in his estate in Taiq which was strategically a formidable position. Moreover, he had the promise of the Imperial troops in Pontus to come to his aid. Thus, once again it was the empty promises of the foreigner which inspired the ringleaders of the rebel-

lion. It seems it was this circumstance which induced Ashot to give his reluctant assent.

Although Constantine Copronymus captured the cities of Karin and Melitene the idea of offering a remedy to the Armenians was far from his mind. Consequently the unity of the princes was broken, the plan of rebellion was blown up and Ashot started for Bagrevand to see the Arab commander. The cause of the failure of the rebellion of course was Ashot. Infuriated by the defection, Grigor Mamikonian attacked Ashot by night, captured him and turned him over to the servants of his murdered brother David to "gouge out his eyes."

Deprived of his eyesight, at the cost of the light of his eyes Ashot saved Armenia from new disasters.

It must be observed here that Ashot's conduct toward Grigor was no less in violation of the Covenant than the conduct of Vassak Siuni toward Vardan Mamikonian. And yet the historian calls the followers of Grigor "Vordik hantzanatz" — sons of crime — and Grigor himself "perished like a dog and his memory was forgotten" while Ashot becomes "the crowning glory of the Armenian nation."

Ashot was succeeded by his uncle Bagarat's son Sahak, a handsome, tall and genteel man. In all probability this is the Prince Sahak who was the patron of Khorenatzi who left an immortal memory as the first historian of the Armenians.

The bitterness of the foiled rebellion lingered long in the hearts of the Mamikonians like a smouldering fire which would explode some day. When the agonizing period of 25 years was over the country once again was overcast with new clouds of trouble. The militant forces, having recuperated, once again rose in rebellion to rid the land of the foreign yoke — "Better to die with valor than endure a life of servitude," in the words of the historian.

It is the same hands which raise the ban-

ner of rebellion. Having completed his military dispositions in the City of Dovin, Artavazd Mamikonian raided Shirak where he smote the Arab tax collector in the town of Koumayr (present day Alexandropol lately rechristened Leninakan instead of restoring the ancient name of Kiumri which the people still use.)

The signal was given. Another Arab tax collector fell by the sword of Mushegh Mamikonian who fortified himself in the ancient castle of Artagers. The news reached the capital of Dovin. The garrison of 4000 marched against Mushegh but retreated after a heavy slaughter.

The mob already had thronged the streets of Dovin. The panicky women were rushing out to meet their loved ones with cries of wailing. Suddenly, no one knew how, roving preachers infiltrated the crowd who incited the people and urged them on with the hope of victory. "Behold the hour of your salvation is near," shouted a clergyman, "for I have turned the royal rod toward the House of Torgomah to take your revenge from Ishmail. Fear not that your numbers are small for each of you shall pursue a thousand and two hundred."

However, all this was self-deception, or as the historian says "a false vision desirable to the heart." The rebels succeeded in winning over Commander Sumbat, the son of blinded Ashot. Being the son-in-law of the Mamikonians he had to give in. The Lord of the land was Ashot the Prince of Princes, the son of the abovementioned Sahak, "a man of wisdom and discretion," who openly opposed the rebellion and advised the people not to listen to the religious fanatic and desist from this mad adventure.

It was a moment of sharp clash of the two partisan views. The position of Ashot was very delicate. Twenty years before the other Ashot had found himself in the same position, the brother of this Ashot's grand-

father. Like him Ashot did not throw off the responsibility from his shoulders, and did not fear to pronounce the following clear and discreet words:

"You are children and adolescents and I know you cannot stand against the might of the hydra-headed dragon, for he is strong in might and his troops are numberless and his war supplies are inexhaustable. And all kingdoms which opposed his rule were shattered like a vessel of clay. Even the Roman kingdom (Byzantine) could not raise a hand against him but trembled and shook from his face and dared not go against his command. You are not unfamiliar with the might of the Greek King, the valor of his person and the multitude of his armies but who never even thought of wresting the land of the Armenians from his hand, Constantine, the son of Leo, who in one day wrestled with mighty beasts and slew the lion as if he were a kid. He who was so mighty but did not venture against the Arab, who are you, who do you rely upon, and by whose might do you think you can stand against his invincible might?"

"Behold, if it pleases you, hearken to my advice, for I have in mind only your good and the peace of our land. Two ways are open to you. Either turn back, return to his service, quiet down and live in peace, or refuse and leave the land with your families, abandon the inheritance of your ancestors, your homes, your vineyards, your fields and your forests and the graves of your forefathers and go live a wanderer's life in the Emperor's domain. I know the divine character of the Prince of Ishmail, that he will not stop until he accomplishes his will."

The wise advice of this far-sighted prince which might have served as a basis of political activity of the immediate past even for us remained a voice in the wilderness. The rebels already had laid seige to Karin. Dovin was living in terror. Suddenly

dismal news shook the land; the Arab army, consisting of 30,000 mercenary Turks under the command of a man called Amri had arrived at the City of Khlat. At this time Ashot was in the city, and seeing the awful danger, sent word everywhere to unite and resist the enemy. Apparently this is a weak attempt at justification on the part of the historian. In all probability Ashot had gone to the enemy camp on a reconciliatory mission.

The rebels put no faith in Ashot's advice thinking he wanted to raise the siege of Karin perfidiously in order to please the Arabs. A company of the rebels marched on the City of Arjesh but met with a setback as a result of the treachery of the citizens. The Arabs advanced to Bagrevad and pitched camp near the village of Artzni.

The 'black news from Arjesh having reached Karin the Armenians raised the siege and marched against the enemy. Even the historian is surprised that, instead of fleeing to the Greek border to safety, they faced the enemy, "preferring to die rather than to see the loss of the fatherland and the desecration of the Christian church."

They were scarcely 5,000 consisting of the nobility and the peasantry. At first they repulsed the enemy onslaught, but later overwhelmed by numbers, the peasant fighters abandoned their positions and, dispersed. This left the nobility who, encouraging one another, threw themselves into the arms of death. "Let us die bravely and with honor in our land and in our nation and let our eyes not see the trampling and the desecration of our sacred shrines."

This holy murmur on their lips, three thousand martyrs fell among whom were Mushegh Mamikonian and Sumbat Bagratouni. The martyrs of the fatherland were left unburied, under the rain and the sun.

The battle of Arjesh took place on Saturday, the 4th of the Armenian month of

Hriditz, while the battle of Artzni was fought on the 13th of the same month, April 15 and 23 of 775. The bloody clouds vanished from the horizon of Armenian skies, the land was pacified and the work of reconstruction was resumed. The rebel Sumbat's son Ashot the Musaker (Meat eater) with his discretionary policy laid the foundation of the Bagratid power. He purchased Arsharounik and Bagaran from the Kamsarakans and moved his capital. His son Bagarat established himself in Taron, the other son Sumbat succeeded his father.

The ninth century had a unique distinction for the Armenians. Not only they were prosperous in their fatherland but in the Byzantine Government they occupied a secure position which would lead them someday to the great throne of Constantine. On the other hand the Arab empire was showing signs of disintegration. The Caliphs, having reached the peak of their glory, were now on the decline to become playthings at the hands of Turkish mercenaries in the not distant future. Babek's movement, both political and social, was a great blow to the prestige of the empire. The Amiras of the remote provinces were in revolt, striving for independence.

All this was no secret to the Armenians as well. It would be unjust to censure the Armenians for lack of political insight in regard to future events. To see the distance, to penetrate the future was not beyond the reach of the Armenians. Their only fault is that they have been unable to keep pace with the events; they try to anticipate the events, run ahead instead of following with firm, steady steps.

The son of the Meat-eater, Bagarat, as well as the Prince of Arzrounis, sensing the weakness of the Arabs, decided to stop the payment of the customary tribute. The Government was forced to exert pressure to collect the annual taxes. And one day the tax collectors were killed in Taron.

These murders of a political nature embittered the Arabs. In the days of Muttavakil a furious storm passed over Armenia, the last and the best proof of the empire's weakness. The stronger a government the more tolerant and magnanimous toward the revolts of subject peoples; the weaker the government commensurately more ruthless its treatment.

In the middle of the ninth century the incompetent and effeminate Caliph sent a Turk by the name of Boogha, an old man of 80 whose innate brutality had not relaxed even under the weight of his years who came to scourge Armenia in a blood-bath. Boogha was bloodthirsty and perfidious, for perfidy is the vanguard of cruelty. By deceit and flattery he summoned all the influential princes of Taron, Vaspourakan, Siunik, Quardman, and as far as unreliable Musliman Amiras of Khlat and Tiflis, he arrested them and took them to Baghdad.

Many of these died in exile, including Prince Sumbat whose Arabic name was Ablabas. But his son Ashot avenged the death of his father and the other martyrs by his victory. The Arab yoke in Armenia came to an end just at the moment when another offspring of the Armenians, Basil the Macedonian was ascending the Byzantine throne.

Ashot's victory marked the triumph of the Bagratid faction and the defeat of the Mamikonians. It was not in vain that Ashot beheaded the Mamikonian Prince Gourdik and sent his head to Caliph Samarra.

With the bloody head of Prince Gourdik fell once and forever the red banner which had waved gloriously for four centuries. The red banner led to political freedom through the bloody road. Tyranny against tyranny, force against force, blood against blood — this was the motto. The ancients have glorified Vardan, the hero of Avarayr, with the sobriquet of Vardan the Red. His valiant offspring who shone with the same

sublimity in later years have a right to the title of brave warriors.

It is difficult to find a princely family in any nation which remained loyal to its tribal tradition for so many centuries. The Mushegh of the eighth century is a picture of the Mushegh of the fourth century. Even the names, transmitted from generation to generation, were the reminders of the past. The Mamikonian dynasty is the personification of Armenian military prowess, the living image of the Armenian knighthood.

"The fear of the sword is unknown to our tribe," says Vardan, "and none of us at any time has ever shrunk from the dread of the sword. Our solicitude and care for the good of a good companion more than our persons is known to you all."

This is the true character of the Mamikonian family, recorded by the historian through the lips of Vardan.

They were the sworn soldiers of Armenia and the dignity of the Armenian people who became exhausted in unequal fights, became heroes, and were burnt by the fire of their self-devotion. What is heroism if not contempt for death?

The Mamikonian princes were heroes each, matchless flowers blossoming on the rocky ridges of Armenia's past history, one which would bring honor to any nation's history. These beautiful flowers were scorched by the sun. The griefs and the deaths multiplied especially after Vardan's death as we have seen and the men of the Mamikonian family, drained of all blood, retired from the field of history precisely when their happy rival, the House of Bagratouni was ascending the ladder of success to the royal mansion.

The character of the Bagratids, their temperament and the path they had chosen was entirely different. No less valiant and patriotic, the Bagratid prince was at the same time circumspect and practical. The inability to control one's passions is a

weakness. Those were centuries of tyranny and oppression when public interest toward brute force demanded silence rather than speaking outright, to endure rather than give way to emotion. Personal daring, of course, is fascinating but often disastrous for the public interest. The responsible leader is often obliged to turn away from personal exploits, suppress within him the bitterness of life, and to pulverize the misfortunes of life under the grindstone of patience without allowing them to explode into the open.

At first the Bagratid Sumbats, like the Mamikonians, were used to keeping a hand on the dagger, but later the Ashots were obliged to keep a hand on the forehead. Deliberate and astute, by temperament, the Bagratids did not believe in violent outbursts, they were even capable of perpetrating evil in order to prevent a greater evil.

If the Mamikonians were the shining bricks of Armenia's crucifixion and the sword, the Bagratids were the pillars of Armenian prudence. The statue of King Gagik which was unearthed in Ani shows him neither mounted on a steed, in the act of hurling his javelin, or with a golden helmet, but presents him as a white-haired old man, more like a monk than a soldier — with a long robe, his waist tightly encased in a belt, a small folded headgear on his head, and his stretched arms holding the shrine of the fatherland.

Speaking of Ashot, the contemporary historian says, "He did not fight his enemies for spite or sheer love of the might, but through kind words and beneficial advice he gave them direction to his own will."

This mild and peaceful policy which the Bagratids generally followed was not so easy. The path of appeasement is tortuous and morally costly. To sink to the level of abject slavery before the tyrant, to become apostate, to stifle the voice of conscience by fratricide and apostasy — those were

the thorns and the thistles on the narrow road which led to the Bagratid crown.

Sumbat's offspring, the same Sumbat who did not fear the beasts, were obliged to descend to the rockbottom of submissiveness, at the cost of such spiritual anguish to insure the welfare of the fatherland. King Ashot's father Sumbat is called The Confessor. His crowned son who ascended the throne on the bloody corpse of Gourdik Mamikonian was equally worthy of the same title.

The success of one of the rival factions often makes us forget the value of the other. This partial attitude comes from those judges who have been classified as partisans.

From the original period to the downfall of the Sassanid Dynasty the Mamikonian influence was dominant. The Nakhararate order was still in full force. National aspirations were associated with the clash of arms which revolved around tribal commanders. The sympathy of the people was with the Nakharars. The exponents of the Armenian letters, Faustus, Elisha, Lazar of Pharbe, Hovhan Mamikonian, they all are extollers of the Mamikonian House and their followers. The seventh century was a period of oscillation between hopes and sympathies, and Sebeos, the chronicler of the period, tries to be conscientious and impartial in regard to the rivalling forces.

After the entrenchment of the Arabs the Bagratids made perceptible strides and gradually won the sympathy of the people. True, the Mamikonian eagles still continued to soar on the battlefields but they no longer had any eulogists. The chroniclers Ghévond (Leo), Hovhan Catholicos, Shapouh Bagratouni and Asoghik exclusively eulogize and support the Bagratid princes. Among these chroniclers is the celebrated Armenian historian Moses of Khorene. He is the singer of the Bagratids and the curser of the Mamikonians. Nor is this praise dic-

tated by his urge to please his Bagratid patron. The historian's character and calling leave no room for such a doubt. Khorenatzi is ideologically opposed to the Mamikonian policy and is a believer in peace.

The Father of Armenian historians was a patriot and his views would have been binding did they pertain to his times. The trouble is, he approaches ancient history with a new criterion and wants to expurgate all the illustrious Mamikonian names and expunge their memory. Artavazd, Mushegh, Vassak, Manuel, those rare heroes of the fourth century whose powerful and moving characters constitute the best pages of Faustus are ignored by Khorenatzi, but he records the name of Vahan the Apostate, Meroujan's confederate, again without mentioning the name of Samuel who erased this solitary stain from the spotless Mamikonian name.

The exploits of the heroes of Faustus are attributed by Khorenatzi to others — the Aravanian, Amatouni or the Bagratid Houses. Khorenatzi, the giant of the Armenian mind, is so jealous, so narrow-minded, and so partisan. He seems to have been embittered by the trouble making of the Mamikonians of his time.

It is difficult to deny the red trail which the Mamikonians have left on Armenian history. If we may be pardoned for comparing the public with the individual, the Mamikonian House, before and after the time of Khorenatzi, always remained the throbbing heart of the Armenian nation.

The thinking head, the intellect, even if we flatter the vanity of the opposing faction by ascribing to it these virtues, is a hopeless force without the inspiration of the heart. In practical life it is the emotional infusions which lend wing and flight to the mind. It was the Mamikonian faction which laid the seeds for the Bagratid harvest. Like all things, the love of freedom, too, needs the care of loving hands. Audaci-

ous flights and the thunder of protest, no matter how fruitless, have this meaning that they prevent a people's humility and servility from reaching the level of abject slavery.

The sense of duty to defend political rights even at the cost of one's life, this was the ground on which was erected the Court of Bakaran for the setting of which all the preceding military movements made their contribution.

It would be an error to think, however, that the major factions which plowed the furrows of four centuries of Armenian history were the mere offspring of the dispositions of two princely houses, or the expression of their tribal aptitudes. The Mamikonian and Bagratid houses were the leaders of two different directions, and not the creators of those directions. If these princely tribes had never existed, or had existed long before, the two currents would have continued just the same. They might perhaps have lost that peculiar trait which is conditioned by the individualisms of the two houses, but nothing from the essence would have been lost.

There political currents which I have outlined go far deeper, with ramifications which rest on historical developments and the varying aspects of economic-social life. These are the ancient order of the Nakharars and the newly-budding bourgeoisie.

In the initial stages feudalism was the dominant order in Armenia as well as the whole of Iran. With the downfall of the Sassanids this ancient eastern order was doomed to disintegrate and disappear. The Arabs played no small role in its dissolution. In the incessant wars of four centuries nearly 50 Nakhararates had been annihilated, leaving only ten. The Mamikonian dynasty had been the living breath of Armenian feudalism, the flower of the Armenian chivalry. With the disintegration and

the dissolution of the nobility, its ideological exponent, the Mamikonian House, naturally would disappear from the scene. It was not the Arabs who would patronize the Mamikonians.

The posts occupied by the passing nobility were gradually occupied by the new bourgeois class. The cities were flourishing while the princely castles were being covered with the moss. It was on this newly-rising force that the Bagratids, the leaders of the thinning nobility, relied.

Each nook and corner of the Armenia of the Nakharars was a small but independent political unit, a compact and self-sufficient state, socially and economically. It supplied its own needs, engaging in agriculture and animal husbandry. Aside from the working peasantry there was no other class. This peasantry needed its prince to protect the boundaries from the attacks and the pillage of the enemies.

The preoccupations of the city-dwellers are entirely different. Their occupations chiefly are trading and artisanship. Both require a broad range of activity, as well as safety of the roads. An absolute government was preferable to a network of minor lords which in reality were so many traps for the marching caravans. It must also be observed that the population of the cities consisted largely of foreigners — more Arabs, Assyrians and Persians than Armenians who as yet were not used to trading.

A peaceful policy was more in keeping with the needs of the cities than emancipatory turmoils. The example of Arjesh is instructive. When in 772 the Armenian rebels marched on Arjesh, the citizens secretly alerted the Commander of the Arab army in Khlat who at the time was entertaining Ashot Bagratouni. "And as they approached the outskirts, the people of the city alerted Amr, the Commander of Ishmail in Khlat, of the coming of the Armenian Nakharars."

The Arabs laid an ambush, surprised the Armenian army, and slaughtered about 1500.

The clash between the feudal lords, the peasants and the cityfolk has been noted and recorded by Khorenatzi. Through the lips of Vagharshak he declares, "He commanded the city dwellers to be respectful towards the peasants and the peasants to respect the city folk as their princes. And the city folk should not take superior airs towards the peasantry but should treat them like brothers for the sake of a reformed and unenvious life which is the only source of a reconstructive and peaceful life."

The bloated bourgeoisie dared to take the place of the withered princes. The historian finds this tendency quite natural and exhorts the peasant class to accord them the honor which was due to the princes. Humanely he also advises the city folk not to be too superior but to treat the peasants like their brothers in the interest of the country's welfare. This is the social revolution.

For the infant but already enriched class, the policy of the Ashots was both desirable and favorable — slowly to integrate the country, to extend the boundaries of the land and to broaden the lines of intercommunication without severing their ties with the neighboring major states. The shining expression of the newly-created order, its very pubescence, was soon to be materialized in the royal City of Ani, the great mart of the east. The same Ani was to become the foundry where the weapons of the Armenian nobility would be welded, and which, adopting itself to the new conditions, would enable the Armenian genius to shine in the fields of commerce and productivity.

While the last rays of feudalism were dying in Ani, the West was just hailing its dawn. From the sociological viewpoint the

priority belonged to the East, the vanguard of the bourgeois order.

Thus, the period of four centuries leading from one crown to the other proceeded along the consistent path of development. The thin thread of progress, no matter how

often broken and severed by external horrors, nevertheless life glided over them all. Under the protectorate of the crowned Bagratids the Armenian toil not only managed to confine itself within its national borders, but brought its contribution to the storehouse of world civilization.



TIGER CAT

P. K. THOMAJAN

Jiji was his name. He was the handsomest tiger cat you ever saw with his big brown eyes, glossy gray coat dotted with dabs of black, long white whiskers, and a tail that curled like a powerful whip.

Jiji lived in that wonderful place, Greenwich Village, where so many artists live and paint. There he felt at home and everywhere was his home.

Everybody knew Jiji . . . everybody loved him and wanted to paint him for he looked so beautiful every way he turned. But Jiji never gave anyone the chance. He felt that would be capturing him, and for that there would be a proper time and place, when he was good and ready.

When Jiji walked along the streets, people looked at him twice. He was just more than a cat, and never once did he get out of the way for any dog. He gave a dog one look, and the way was clear. As for the other cats, they were very jealous of Jiji's good looks. Once a bunch of tough alley cats thought they would try and muss him up. When Jiji saw this, he backed against a wall, humped his back, bristled his whiskers, squinted his eyes . . . then slowly started walking towards these bullies. When they saw how fearless Jiji was . . . they scattered in all directions.

You would never find Jiji sneaking around old garbage cans after food, or chasing rats, or sleeping in dirty doorways. Wherever he made up his mind to go, the door was open.

Jiji's favorite home was the Jiji Tea

Shoppe, which was named after him. It carried his picture on the sign outside with the cute words: Food That Will Make You PURR With Delight.

Of course, Jiji had a special table there on which was a card: Reserved for Jiji. Diners had a lot of fun watching Jiji lap his bowl of milk and go through his meal and they were amazed at his neat table manners. After lunch, he would stroll over to the front window, curl up and sun himself for an hour or so. Then, he would make the round of his various friends.

He would drop in at Mike's Pet Shop and listen to the canaries give a concert. Then, Jiji would listen for Pete, the hurdy gurdy man, and head for wherever he might be. He loved to sit on top of Pete's piano wagon and swing and sway to the music. His favorite tune was "Kitten on The Keys" which Pete would play for him over and over again. Of course, wherever Jiji went, young and old gathered around him — being always amused by his antics. Another person Jiji liked to visit was his friend, Charlie, who had a frankfurter stand. He would hop on the cart and sit under the big parasol. Again, people would cluster about and point him out as Greenwich Village's official mascot. Many of the frankfurters bought were fed to Jiji, and he didn't mind that at all.

Jiji was slim and sleek and all muscles because he got plenty of exercise. He had a habit of climbing tall telephone poles and lying on their cross arms, where he

seemed to be listening to interesting conversation. He also liked to walk fences and meander around rooftops.

You can well imagine that all kinds of she-cats tried to flirt with Jiji and win his heart, but he was never interested in the ones he met. What he was looking for was a cat that was a real lady, a queen that he could be proud of, that was worth fighting for. So far, this particular miss seemed to be hiding from him, but he could be patient.

Jiji could also tell a good painting from a bad one. Once an artist lured Jiji into his studio, got him to pose for a while as he watched his pet parrot. Then when he was just about through, Jiji took one glance at the awful picture — jumped through the canvas — jumped through the window, and disappeared.

One thing that annoyed Jiji no end was seeing his pictures in the Village paper, snapped by some snooping photographer. Then some silly wisecrack would appear under the picture. Jiji felt so superior when he saw things like this.

One day, soon afterward, Jiji was walking along when his ears heard a sweet whistle behind him, then a cheery voice, saying, "Hi, Jiji, I want to talk to you for a second."

Jiji looked around and liked what he saw — a jolly face covered with freckles and topped by a mass of red hair.

"I'm Artie," he said, "I think we can help each other. Please come along with me to my studio."

Jiji thought a moment and something inside him whispered "Go" — so he obeyed. They climbed floor after floor in an old building until they reached the top floor.

Opening the door, Artie said, "Look around and make yourself at home." Then, Jiji had the surprise of his life. There . . . sleeping on the velvet-covered sofa was the loveliest cat he had ever seen . . . a fluffy white angora.

Artie remarked, "That's Mimi, I think

she'd enjoy meeting you. Let me introduce you two right now."

The next moment, Mimi's big blue eyes were wide open and they glowed when they lighted on Jiji. They purred at each other in the most understanding way.

"I knew you'd like each other," said Artie, "in fact, you're both invited to share this home with me as long as you like."

That sentence sent a tingle right through Jiji and bells seemed to ring.

"Well, you both look hungry," Artie remarked, "I've got a nice big can of sardines you two can help yourselves to."

When it was opened and placed before them, both Jiji and Mimi waited for the other to start — out of respect and courtesy. Finally, Artie had to divide the sardines and place them in separate plates. "Something tells me," he observed, "that you two are going to get along very well." When Jiji and Mimi had licked their plates clean, Artie lit his pipe, picked up a brush, placed Jiji before him and started to paint, saying, "Jiji, you know that you are the best model in all the Village, and I am going to make a painting of you *right now* that is going to win for you, Mimi and me — the big prize at the Show."

That statement was a call to action — Jiji came to attention like a soldier and he struck an inspired pose that had Mimi staring at him with adoring eyes. By morning, the painting was finished.

Artie had made Jiji look like the royal King of all the cats, and Mimi stood by like a proud Queen. "That's it," smiled Artie.

Well, there's not much left to say in this story, except that Artie's painting won first prize in the Greenwich Village Show, and in no time some rich man bought it for a thousand dollars.

That night, Jiji, Mimi and Artie celebrated at the Tea Shoppe. As Artie was finishing his dessert, he remarked, "Can you guess what my next masterpiece will be?"

"Please tell us," pleaded Jiji and Mimi, lost in wonderment. "Naturally, it will be of you two, and what a picture *that* will be!" chuckled Artie.

Those magic words made Jiji feel that he could lick the whole world with his tongue, and his two front paws, if that was necessary.



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VIII. Political and Civil Liberty in the U. S.: Speech As A Weapon in Labor's Arsenal

GEORGE P. RICE, JR.

I

The dictionary tells us that the word "picket" is of French derivation, and that in the beginning it meant flankers or outposts whose duty it was to guard the main body of troops from surprise attack by the enemy. Today in the vocabulary of labor law it refers to the shock troops whose function it is to stand in the front line of attack, often in the stabbing fury of the fray, to publicize disputes between management and labor and to enforce decisions of the labor unions and their leaders. They serve notice to the general public that a dispute exists; often picketing is the means of setting up a line which other union workers will not cross because to do so would violate basic principles of union cooperation respected everywhere; and sometimes, where feelings run high, the picket line may present an actual physical barrier whose human segments forcibly and tangibly prevent ingress or egress to a struck plant. The history of labor management relations records considerable variety in the methods and aims of pickets, ranging from peaceful parading to incitement of serious breaches of the peace.

It must be kept in mind that, regardless of the justice of solution of such disputes, the parties in interest include the public as well as management, labor, and government. The public is interested in avoiding economic friction and breaches of the

peace; management adds to this its interest in amicable relations and uninterrupted production and reasonable profits; and labor wants fair wages, working conditions, fringe benefits, and economic security.

The determination by government within the past twenty years or so that labor shall sit down with management and exercise equal strength in arms length bargaining about wages, hours, and working conditions has necessitated a high evaluation of speech as a weapon in labor's arsenal. The legislation of the past sixty years — the Sherman Act, the Clayton Act, the Railway Act, and the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, (with its 1951 amendments), has given to the Courts the tools required to make decisions as to the legality of union activities in labor disputes. **ONE OF THESE TOOLS DEALS WITH THE OBJECT SOUGHT BY REPRESENTATIVES OF LABOR, AND THE OTHER ASSESSES THE MEANS USED TO ATTAIN THE DESIRED END.** In the light of union activities and the Court decisions, it has become apparent that picketing, next to the actual strike, is the most powerful weapon available to labor in its endeavors to exert economic pressure upon management.

Picketing includes the use of free speech by labor, under law, as a device to publicize its demands and the grounds upon which they rest. Under law unions may picket in a variety of situations: before a firm

where it has no members, but seeks to induce employees there to join the picketing union; to compel employer recognition of a union believed to have a *de facto* status among the workers in the particular plant; and finally, to compel an employer to cease using non-union goods where the union is engaged in controversy with their manufacturer.

The essential question raised by the Courts in the appropriate cases is whether or not pickets persuade or coerce? "Persuasion" comes from the Latin, *per suasio*, meaning "by sweetness," and implies a process of influencing the beliefs or conduct of men on the merits of the question alone. "Coercion" carries the idea of enforcing obedience by the exercise of force or authority, rather than freely given support. In general, courts have held the exercise of persuasion a proper and lawfully protected activity, while they have restrained and prohibited coercion.

II

The present approximately equal positions of management and labor did not always exist. Histories and judicial decisions provide ample evidence that for hundreds of years their respective powers were very dissimilar, the balance inclining toward management by virtue of its control of plant, capital, and its strongly entrenched place to bargain with management on anything like equal terms. From the time of the medieval guild until the closing years of the nineteenth century this condition continued to obtain. There are plenty of early cases to indicate the Courts were by no means willing to grant labor the use of the strike as a weapon to parry management's use of the labor-cut or lay-off. The case of *American Steel Foundries v. Tri-City Central Trades Council*, 257 U. S. 184 (1921), is a relatively late example. In it picketing *per se* was held illegal as an economic weapon of labor. But signs of things to come were to be observed at least twen-

ty years before this. As early as 1902 it had been held that: "Mere picketing, therefore, if it is peaceful, if there is no threat or intimidation, if it is confined to simple persuasion, I do not regard in any sense as unlawful, whatever may be the motive of the picketers." *Foster v. Retail Clerks' Protective Association*, 78 New York Supplement, 860, at 867 (1902). But the same climate of opinion did not prevail in an Iowa Federal District Court in 1905 where the Court declared: "... There is and can be no such thing as peaceful picketing, any more than there can be chaste vulgarity, or peaceful mobbing, or lawful lynching." *Atchison, Topeka, and Sante Fe Railroad v. Gee*, 139 Fed. 582 (1905).

It has been asserted earlier that pickets stand in the front line of the labor-management disputes. The resultant action varies: mere patrols may pass up and down; there may be physical violence initiated by pickets or in response to such conduct by the agents of management; name-calling, humorous or vitriolic, may occur; speeches, shouting, and even hand-to-hand conflict may take place in the course of a strike.

The law provides penalties under common and statute law for indulgence in violence during disputes. Charges may range from assault, malicious mischief, (where property has been destroyed), mayhem, or manslaughter. If property losses stem from the disturbance, the conduct of the individual as well as of the group with which he has acted will be examined to determine the proximate cause and responsibility under law. Sometimes the intended action will not lie. Thus, it has been held in Court that four pickets walking abreast on an ordinary sidewalk and whose behavior did not include any other action that the patrol itself were not guilty of disorderly conduct when they dispersed without protest at the command of the police. *People v. Nixon*, 248 N. Y. 182 (1928). The Court offered the dictum, however, that if they had persisted

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in the patrol, a charge of disorderly conduct would have been sustained. Upon occasion the use of placards publicizing false statements has been restrained by the courts on the ground that their exhibition at points where no strike was actually in progress was a menace to the public peace. (*People v. Jenkins*, 138 Misc. 498 (1930).)

Employers may be affected in more than one *situs* in the course of a strike. Not only may they be the object of patrolled vigilance at the premises of a plant, but their trucks may be followed about during the course of deliveries, (ambulatory picketing), and their homes themselves may become the object of concerted publicity on the part of strikers. To what extent, then, may the strikers invade privacy? The Courts appear divided. It has been held that a patrol carrying signs before the dwelling of a non-union worker, proclaiming her conduct anti-union, could be restrained upon the ground of undue invasion of privacy and of annoyance to the entire neighborhood. *State v. Zanker*, 179 Minn. 355 (1930). The opposite point of view has also been expressed. Application for an injunction to restrain picketing before the home of an employer has been denied on the ground that the disputed action was not an invasion of the employer's privacy so much as it was a legal means of publicizing the dispute, and the action of the pickets is likened to the purchase of advertising space in a newspaper. *Leeman v. Amalgamated Retail & Dept. Store Employees Union*, 25 L. R. R. M. 2343, Cal. Superior Court, 1950.)

It should be remarked that the militant origins of some of the vocabulary of labor-management disputes, e. g., "strike" and "picket", have unfortunate repercussions in the domains of psychology and morale. Their connotations of violence have introduced an aura of controversy even on occasions where both parties have sat down at

the conference table with full intent to bargain in complete good faith.

III

The Taft-Hartley Act expresses a determination that it is public policy in the United States that organization of labor is a desirable aim to be forwarded by appropriate legislation and supporting decisions of the judiciary. One of the most controversial devices used to further this legitimate aim is the use of "stranger picketing." This term implies the use of "strangers," i. e., persons not in the employ of the struck firm or plant, to patrol around its premises on the ground that the union seeking recognition as the bargaining agent of workers there has no members immediately on its payroll, and hence cannot use employees to picket. An examination of the history and decisions related to this procedure points up two basic purposes of "stranger picketing": (a) to organize fresh establishments for the first time; and (b) to cause a picketed business to cease dealing with another firm with which the union has a dispute. Offhand, one would judge that "stranger picketing" is an unwarranted interference with matters which are the primary and legitimate concern only of the business and its employees, with the intervening union in very dubious status. There may even be cases where the employees of the struck plant do not want to join the union. It is even possible that establishment of a union within the plant, with increased wages and fringe benefits, will drive the firm into bankruptcy, thus costing the employment of its workers.

The answer to this objection may be found in the basic design of public policy as to unions — it is intended they shall generally prevail in American industry. Unions hold that the gains in wages, hours, and working conditions must be achieved throughout the ranks of a given industry for the benefit of all employed within it.

ALL WORKERS THEREIN MUST BE TREATED ALIKE AND PROVIDED WITH EQUAL ADVANTAGES. A non-union business may, under this philosophy, be justifiably picketed by strangers whose aim is to unify and solidify every part of that industry for the general welfare of all who derive their living from it. (A corollary is that a business which cannot maintain itself while paying suitable wages on the union scale does not deserve to continue in active operation, a harsh but inescapable application of the laws of economics.) Thus, it is lawful to call a strike and to picket the premises of an employer to compel him to use union labor at union rates. And the strike and the picketing may be used together or separately; neither is the use of one without the other unlawful. *Exchange Bakery v. Rifkin*, 245 N. Y. 260; 157 N. E. 130, 132 (1927).

However, the majority rule appears to be that stranger picketing may be enjoined where the establishment of a secondary boycott is the aim.

IV

The liberal dissent of Mr. Justice Holmes is the *Vegeahn* case in 1896, especially with those aspects of the problem touching on freedom of speech, was an important advance in defining labor's use of free legal speech. It also earned the Great Dissenter the approving attention of President Theodore Roosevelt and a seat on the United States Supreme Court a few years later. Holmes made it clear that he disagreed with his colleagues on the Massachusetts' Supreme Court of Judicature because he felt it was unjust to enjoin peaceful picketing of an employer's premises by striking employees whose aim was a higher paycheck. However, the view prevailed that patrols by the pickets were a potential cause of breach of the peace. *Vegeahn v. Guntner*, 167 Mass. 92; 44 N. E. 1077 (1896). As was so often to occur, however,

the views of Holmes prevailed in due course. In 1921 the courts found peaceful picketing was legal and that it was intimately connected with freedom of speech. *Senn v. Tile Layers Protective Union*, 301 U. S. 468 (1937).

Eleven years later Congressional action wrote Section 4 into the Norris-La-Guardian Act to prohibit federal courts from enjoining the following acts in the course of labor-management disputes:

1. Publicizing the facts in labor-management disputes by any recognized means of propaganda — speech, picketing, advertisements, and the like, so long as the persons concerned avoided violence or fraud.

2. Peaceful assembling of workers for the purpose of organizing, or if already organized, for action in the best interest of their rights.

3. Informing others of an intent to do any of these things.

The relation of this legislation to basic constitutional rights set down in the I, V, and XIV amendments is clearly and closely established. As a result, labor gained the statutory right to invoke the police power to protect peaceful picketing.

The flood-tide of the free speech doctrine, from the point of view of labor, occurred in 1940 when the case of *Thornhill v. Alabama* reached the United States Supreme Court. *Thornhill v. Alabama*, 310 U. S. 88 (1940). Thornhill had been arrested for peaceful picketing on land belonging to a plaintiff Alabama company. He was tried under an Alabama statute prohibiting loitering or picketing about a place of business without legal cause. Thornhill admitted being engaged in one or more acts tantamount to peaceful picketing. In reversing his Alabama conviction, the Supreme Court through Mr. Justice Murphy discussed free speech, picketing, and labor along these lines:

1. The basic purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment was to protect the individual

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citizen's free legal speech and press from infringement by a State.

2. Public education and enlightenment is impaired by the imposition of unwise restraints upon speech and press and interferes with the processes by which popular government becomes aware of defects and corrects them.

3. A statute enacted to protect the dissemination of useful knowledge by speech or press is not to be overthrown because of an occasional abuse of rights exercised under it.

4. The High Court looked with disfavor upon a local ordinance or statute which lent itself to discrimination and severity on the part of local prosecuting officers toward persons or classes which had fallen under their displeasure.

5. The use of a placard and the exercise of peaceful picketing to publicize a labor-management dispute was a proper means of informing the public at large of the dispute.

6. Vesting of too much discretionary power in authorities under loosely worded laws is undesirable. Here in the Alabama statute the words "without just cause or legal excuse" and the failure to define "picket" led to vagueness of a sort which might permit abuse.

The *Swing* case, *American Federation of*

Labor v. Swing, 312 U. S. 321 (1941), gave Mr. Justice Frankfurter an opportunity to say that bans upon free communication of the facts in labor-management disputes are inconsistent with the basic guarantees of freedom of speech. The status of "stranger picketing" was also clarified. "A state cannot exclude workingmen from peacefully exercising the right of free communication by drawing the circle of economic competition between employers and workers so small as to contain only an employer and those directly employed by him. The interdependence of economic interest of all engaged in the same industry has become a commonplace." It is upon foundations such as these that the Court has erected the safeguards which protected stranger picketing from repressive state legislation. Now the trend is that violence has no place in picketing, and that labor will be held liable for the results of tortious conduct during strikes. Breaches of the peace are repugnant to efforts to appeal to reason.

V

These views, it is hoped, may serve to guide readers interested in the uses of speech and picketing in labor-management disputes. The topic is one which is developing constantly, but it is probably more stabilized than any other in the uncertain domain of labor law and legislation.



LITTLE OLD WOMEN IN BLACK

*There they go in their Sunday black
To deck the pews with their sad-feathered hats
Dear little old Armenian women
In ever-lasting earthly mourning.
There must be an angel still seamstress at heart
Busy with colors she is setting apart
Condensing blues out of deepest Lake Van
Gathering gold from rivers of Sevan
Crushing green where Tiflis evergreen grows
Collecting crystals from Massis snows
For raiments for little old women in black
(God bless them all, the thin and the fat)
Colors . . . to wear when mourning is past
And the need for black is over at last.*

DIANA DER HOVANESSIAN

THE GROCER WITH ONE GOOD EYE

GEORGE VUKELICH

Old Garbis was a good old man to work for and he was Armenian and he was very kind to everyone who came into his grocery store except Turks and he was not kind to Turks because he was Armenian.

The Turks had killed his people in the old country and so he came to America and was running his grocery store on 69th Street in West Allis which is very close to Milwaukee.

He often told me how it was when the Turks had come that time in the old country and started killing everybody. They had tried to kill him also but the pistol bullet only put him down unconscious and when he woke up he was in the hospital and he couldn't see out of one eye.

"Sonnamabitches," Old Garbis would say about the Turks over and over. "Sonnamabitches."

Then he would pull out his right eye which was the glass one and let me see into the socket which was very empty and after he wiped off the glass eye on his butcher apron he would replace it and ask me if the eye was in straight or did it look to be crooked.

He always had to hold his head to one side when he was slicing meat or weighing things on the scale so he could see what he was doing and after he showed me about the glass eye, I would try to do the same things with one eye closed and I would have to hold my head to one side like he did. Of course, I would pretend I had one glass eye only while he was in the back

eating his lunch or out somewhere and I was tending the store by myself and there was nobody there to see me.

The old man had a daughter who was grownup and married but her husband had died with TB and she was in the sanitarium all the time and her little boy stayed with the old man. The little boy's name was Garbis also after his grandfather.

Sometimes the older guys on the block would see the little boy Garbis sitting in the store window with a sucker and they would all stop and holler and make faces at him.

"Hey little Garbage!"

"You look just like your grandpa and he's Garbage too!"

"Little Garbage and Big Garbage!"

Once the old man got so mad at the gang for this he grabbed a cleaver from the meatblock and chased the whole bunch of them clear down the street and through the cinderlot behind the Kearney-Trecker factory. He didn't catch any of them but when he got back he was very mad and tired and breathing hard through the nose. Then he pulled up a corner of the butcher apron and wiped his one good eye because there were tears in it.

There was only one Turkish family on our block and this was a man and his two boys. The man's name was Hassan-oghli Mehmed and the hunkie kids called him Hassock and his sons were my age and they were Ali and Mustafa. I think his wife died in the old country and he was

very strict with his boys and they couldn't play baseball with us or kick-the-can in the alley behind Dorich's Tavern.

I didn't like Hassan-oghli because he was mean and he hit me once.

It was a Saturday morning and I was tending the store and because there was nobody there I was pretending I was like the old man Garbis with a glass eye. I was shuffling around the shelves with my head held to one side and saying *sonnamabitches* like the old man always said. *Sonnamabitches* I would say out loud and squint at the shelves. "Goddamsonnamabitches."

The next thing I knew I was cracked on the side of the head and was sprawling in the dry onions which were bagged up on the floor alongside the potatoes.

When I could see through my tears there was Hassan-oghli standing over me and I thought of all those Turks in the old country killing all those poor Armenians. He was going to say something and I was really going to call him a *sonofabitch* and run when the old man Garbis came in through the front door leading the little boy.

"Just five pounds big onions, please," Hassan-oghli said.

I didn't realize what he was talking about at first and then I started pulling onions out of the bag in front of me like I was asleep. My ear was stinging and burning like all hell.

"Yes, Sir Mister Mehmed," I said.

"Not Mister Mehmed," he said. "Mehmed is the first name. Hassan-oghli is the last name."

"Yes, Sir," I said.

"Mister Hassan-oghli."

"Yes, Mister Hassan-oghli."

"Just five pounds big onions, please." Then he pretended to see the old man for the first time.

"Ah, Garbis." Hassan-oghli said good morning and good health to the old man in Armenian.

"Speak English," the old man growled. "Or better, don't speak at all."

"Just good morning and good health to you, Garbis," Hassan-oghli said. "I am buying groceries now."

"I can see what you are doing," the old man said. "This is a free country."

They didn't speak after that because the old man took little Garbis and sat in the store window swatting flies to make the little boy laugh and Hassan-oghli went ahead and ordered his groceries. They filled up two big canned milk cartons and he paid for them cash and then picked up one of the boxes and walked over to the old man.

"I take one box now," Hassan-oghli said and motioned toward me. "You can send the boy to bring the other box to my house. Is that all right?"

Old Garbis stopped swatting the flies.

"It is a free country. I would not take groceries to your house myself and I do not ask the boy to do what I would not do. You want him to bring the groceries you ask him. This is business between you and the boy."

"So then," Hassan-oghli said looking at me hard. "You bring the groceries to my house by dinnertime and I will pay you a little something for your trouble. This is business between you and me."

Nobody around the block ever paid me for delivering their groceries, and if the Turk wanted to pay that was all right with me.

"All right," I said. "I'll bring them by dinnertime."

Hassan-oghli left the store and the old man Garbis went back to swatting flies for the little boy to watch. The sting in my ear was almost all gone now.

"Did Hassan-oghli hit you?" the old man asked.

I didn't know exactly how to answer.

"A little bit," I said.

"Why did he hit you?"

I didn't want to talk about it at all.

"I don't know," I said. "I wasn't doing anything to him."

"Goddam Turk. He has no right to hit you. He hits his own sons like that, too. You see how these Turks are mean."

"Yes, sir," I said. "They are mean."

"Sonnamabitch!" the old man said and swung hard at a harsh buzzing fly on the plate glass. The fly spread like a little string of jelly. It made me feel sick in my mouth because the squashed fly was right above the big new bunches of purple grapes.

I remember thinking: I would like to smash Hassan-oghli like that fly. That Goddam mean Turk sonofabitch. The old man Garbis and I didn't talk about this anymore then and all that morning I pretended I was smashing Hassan-oghli with my fists and watching him flatten out and spread out his insides just like a fly.

Hassan-oghli himself opened the door when I brought the box of groceries to his house. He had a starched white apron around his waist and a big wooden spoon

in his hand. He motioned me inside and I went into the kitchen and there were the boys Ali and Mustafa sitting very straight at the table and eating.

"Hello," I said to them.

"Hello," they said.

The kitchen was very clean and scrubbed-looking and I remembered I didn't clean my shoes on the porch. I looked down at them and they were dirty all right. I wouldn't have cared too much except that I knew Ali and Mustafa had to scrub the house. Hassan-oghli took the box of groceries from me without a word. Then he went to the sink and washed his hands and wiped them on a fresh towel.

"Now, he said. "I want to talk to you."

"I have to get home and eat," I said.

"I will not keep you long," he said. He came over and stood in front of me with his hands on his hips. The hands were very big and red looking from the hot water.

"Do you know why I hit you this morning?"

"No!"

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Vukelich, whose "The Grocer With One Good Eye" is his first contribution to THE ARMENIAN REVIEW, was born in 1927, in So. Milwaukee, Wis., of Slavic parents. He is a veteran of ETO service in World War II, attended the University of Wisconsin as an English language major, and graduated from the Academy of Radio Arts, Toronto. Vukelich poetry has appeared in IDIOM, BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL and BOTTEGHE OSCURE, while his first short story was published as a "Atlantic First" in the ATLANTIC MONTHLY of last June. Vukelich has also written radio scripts for the Canadian Broadcasting Co., and the Ford Theater. He is currently a member of the staff of station WKOW-CBS, Madison, Wis., as an evening disk jockey doing an original type of popular music show — JAZZ — shown from 10:30 to 12 midnite. He is married to a Madison girl, has one daughter, and lives in De-Forest, Wis "in a small country home with three acres and two dogs". Vukelich is currently "doing research on the problem of the lamprey in the Great Lakes," with the purpose of writing eventually a novel on that theme. He



GEORGE VUKELICH

expresses his delight "for the opportunity to publish in such a worthy magazine" as THE ARMENIAN REVIEW.

"No, what?"

"No, sir Hassan-oghli."

"I hit you because you were making fun of the old man Garbis. Do you understand?"

"I wasn't making fun!"

He put out one of the big hands like a policeman.

"Wait, I am not finished. You were making fun of an old man with one glass eye and this I would have told you in the store only there is no point in the old man knowing what you did."

"I wasn't making fun and besides you have no right to hit me!"

"I do not argue with you young man. If it had been my own sons making fun I would hit them also as they will know. Or," he raised his voice and stuck his finger in my face, "if your own father had found my sons making fun like you were making fun, then I would expect that your own father hit my sons and teach them also!"

"My father would not hit Ali and Mustafa because he is not mean like you are!" I looked at Ali and Mustafa and they were just sitting staring down at their soup bowls.

"My father is not mean like a Turk," I shouted.

Hassan-oghli looked like he had been stabbed.

"My father does not kill Armenians and put out their eyes and beat up his sons so they are black and blue!" I was shaking and I was afraid Hassan-oghli would hit me but now I didn't even care. He watched me for a long time and didn't say a word and when he finally spoke, his voice was very low and I knew that he was mad enough to kill me.

"Who tells you these things? The old man Garbis?"

"Yes," I said. "He tells me all about the Turks in the old country and how they killed all the Armenians."

"And so you think all Turkish people are mean and bad?"

I stopped and looked at the two boys at the kitchen table.

"Ali and Mustafa are all right but they're not grownup Turks from the old country."

"Go home now," Hassan-oghli said suddenly. "Go. I will tell your father of our talk. He should teach you with a razor-strap, your father."

"Go ahead and see if I care," I yelled. Then I slammed out of the house and ran hard all the way home and I only looked back just a few times.

When I got back to the grocery store after lunch, I got the shock of my life. Hassan-oghli and his two sons were standing by the old man Garbis in the front by the soda cooler.

"Young man, we are all waiting for you," Hassan-oghli said. "Now, come."

Everybody followed him as he led the way back to the big meatblock for chopping. We all gathered around him and then Hassan-oghli began talking about the old country and the Turks and the Armenians and then he stopped talking in English and I knew he was talking in Armenian. He was speaking very fast and the words just rolled out of him and while I couldn't understand what he was saying I had a general idea of what he was getting so worked up about. I felt he was telling the old man about what happened at his house when I delivered the groceries.

Hassan-oghli talked for a very long time and wouldn't let the old man interrupt him at all and when he finished he picked up a butcherknife from the meat block and held it out to the old man, handle first. You could have heard a pin drop, in fact, I heard a fly buzzing somewhere near us. The old man Garbis took the knife slowly and stood there staring down at the long blade. When he finally looked up from the knife he turned to face me and his one good eye was glistening and wet.

"Do you know what is being done here?" the old man asked. "Do you know what means this knife?"

I shook my head now feeling my heart going like a hammer. The old man Garbis hefted the knife in his hand.

"Hassan-oghli says I am to take his eye out with this knife for what his people did to my people in the old country."

I stared at Hassan-oghli in disbelief. He was standing tall and unflinching and Ali and Mustafa were the same way. The old man looked straight into my face out of his rapidly blinking eye and then he dropped the knife on the block and turned sharply away and was sobbing. Instantly, Hassan-oghli put an arm around the old man to keep him from falling. They stood like that for a long time.

Then Hassan-oghli reached two one dollar bills out of his pants pocket and held them out to me.

"Here. Take. I promised you a little something for bringing the groceries." I wanted to protest but the words wouldn't come.

I shook my head no.

"Take," Hassan-oghli said. "Buy please bat and ball for the baseball. Ali and Mustafa they would like to play this also now." Hassan-oghli shoved the money into Ali's hand because he was standing closest.

"Go now. All of you together. Old Garbis and I will be the grocery store businessmen this day. Also together."

I asked Old Garbis if this was all right and he sobbed yes, everything was all right now. We three, Ali and Mustafa and myself, then walked slowly from the two men who stood holding each other and we did not look back.

In the front window, right above the new purple grapes, I got one of the dollar bills from Ali and reached down and wiped away the smashed fly smudge. Then the three of us stepped out into the hard sharp sunlight of 69th Street and walked without talking in the direction of the Sears, Roebuck Store two blocks up and three blocks over on Greenfield Avenue.



THE QUESTION OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

REUBEN DARBINIAN

The Revival of an Old Idea And Its Underlying Causes

The idea of peaceful coexistence between the Communist and non-Communist worlds is nothing new. From the day when Stalin, after Lenin's death, started his fight against Trotsky's "continuous revolution," having for his motto "Communism in one country," the desirability of peaceful coexistence was agitated by Stalin and his colleagues. The idea practically was moot in the initial years of the Bolshevik Revolution when Lenin and his comrades staked their all on the establishment of Communism in Germany and other leading capitalistic countries as the only means of consolidating and perpetuating their power in Russia. But when this effort failed, Stalin who had succeeded Lenin, to consolidate his position, became a strong proponent of the idea of coexistence.

In view of the fact that the Soviet Government in those days was going through a period of uncertainty and insecurity, both internally and externally, Stalin's championship of the idea of coexistence was perfectly intelligible. Militarily weak, the Soviet was not in a position to threaten the outside world; internally, it was subject to serious economic and political dislocations.

This situation is completely reversed today. Today the Soviet Government, even if not completely exempt from economic and political crises, is infinitely stronger internally than she was before the Second

World War, and externally, she feels herself incomparably more secure than before.

If formerly the Soviet was forced to the defensive, today she is aggressive. Formerly she was afraid of the free world; today it is the free world which is afraid of her.

It was because of this fundamental change that, scarcely the last war was over, the Soviet ventured to launch the "cold war" against the free world, assuming an aggressive policy not only in words but in deeds, thereby removing all doubt in the leading circles of the free world that it was never its intention to live peacefully with the free countries but to pursue their conquest with all the means at its disposal, directly or indirectly.

This condition, as known, was continued until Stalin's death after which his successors had a change of tune. Suddenly they resurrected the almost forgotten idea of peaceful coexistence, and this time in a more systematic and intensified manner.

Why this sudden change, and what are the probable causes and objectives? Is it really possible to have peaceful coexistence between the Soviet and the free world henceforth? These questions are being posed each day and the political leaders of the free world, beginning with foreign office spokesmen to the last journalist or commentator in vain try to find the answer.

There are three basic causes which have led the Soviet to this manifest change reversal of policy. The first of these is the

precarious position of the Soviet and satellite countries whose internal political and economic condition is far from enviable. There is general instability and insecurity. Although Beria and his accomplices were liquidated, the struggle for power continues behind the dark thick walls of the Kremlin. The "collective dictatorship" of Stalin's successors is a temporary expedient. Undoubtedly, the contestants for the power behind that cover are keeping up their intrigues and will continue to do so until one of them, like Stalin, emerges the victor.

There is also the agricultural crisis which has assumed serious proportions and which poses as a distinct menace, not so much because the vast majority of the working masses suffer from its privations, something which the Soviet dictators never worried about, but because it also affects the party and government bureaucracies and the army, especially the officers, on whose contentment largely depends the stability of the Soviet regime.

The dictators of the Kremlin need time to solve these internal problems.

The second cause stems from the realization of the catastrophic nature of nuclear weapons, something which only recently they became wholly aware of when they finally acquired the secret of atom and hydrogen bombs. Stalin, for example, regarded the atom bomb as another of conventional weapons, admittedly the strongest. His successors, however, now that they have built their own stock piles, know for sure that the use of these bombs in case of a war not only can wipe off entire cities and countries, but is capable of destroying entire civilization.

It is quite natural that the bosses of the Kremlin would ask themselves what would be the sense of marching toward a new

war henceforth when they are sure that the enemy will use nuclear weapons which inevitably will destroy both their regime and power, even if they harmed the enemy with the weapons at their disposal. This hypothesis only can explain the Soviet's increasingly feverish effort to outlaw the use of atomic weapons in case of a war through treaty agreements. These efforts have failed because the Soviet refuses to submit to effective international inspection of atomic output, a measure which it considers as a mortal danger to its power.

The third reason why the Soviet is pressing the idea of coexistence so persistently is no doubt the steadily increasing military and economic strength of the free world, as well as its political unity despite the rumors to the contrary. This is proved by the Soviet's extraordinary effort of late to prevent the rearmament of Western Germany and the political, military and economic unity of Western Europe.

Is Peaceful Coexistence Possible?

This is a question which for some time has busied the mind of the leaders of the free world. Manifold and often self-contradictory explanations have been advanced, inspired with more or less pessimism or optimism as the case may be.

To appraise the true value of these explanations it might be profitable to consider the answer which N. Khrushchev, one of the present Soviet dictators, gave recently to Sam Watson, a member of the delegation of British Workers' Union in Moscow. The answer speaks for itself:

"Coexistence in the field of trades is possible immediately; military and diplomatic coexistence, under certain conditions; but ideological coexistence, never."

It is obvious that the Soviet Government will make no concessions on the ideological plane, something which would be the height of naivete even to expect. This means the Soviet will never resign its ideological aim and will continue to pursue the same

* Since this article was written Malenkov has been replaced by Bulganin, and Khrushchev, as the Party Leader, has emerged the power behind the scenes.—ED.

ruthlessly. On the other hand, these aims are nothing but the conquest of all free countries and the establishment of the Communist dictatorship throughout the world.

Khrushchev gives away the Soviet's real motives when he concedes the possibility of peaceful coexistence in the field of trades *immediately*, and in the military and political areas *under certain conditions*, proving the exceeding necessity and even the urgency of at least a temporary coexistence with the free world to enable the Soviet to obtain materials which it lacks and urgently needs and which it can acquire only through free trade with the West.

The Soviet is likewise willing to come to an understanding with the free world pertaining to military and diplomatic issues, provided of course it is negotiated on its own terms as always.

The sad fact is, in all negotiations with the Soviet the chief obstacle has been its faithlessness. The Soviet not only has blocked many a negotiation carried on in good faith through endless hecklings and procrastinations, but on frequent occasions it has rejected its own propositions when the opponents are willing to accept it in entirety as was seen recently by the dismal ending of years long negotiations in regard to the final settlement of the Austrian question. And when we bear in mind that the Soviet is not in the habit of respecting treaties of its own signing, the moment they cease to be of advantage, we can readily see why the present offer of peaceful coexistence under certain conditions is absolutely worthless.

How to explain the Soviet's immediate and unreserved willingness to trade with the free world? The answer to this question is not difficult to find. Just now the Soviet is hard pressed for essential materials to meet the needs of its government and party beurocracy, as well as to extend aid to its satellites, China in particular. Only by trading with the non-Communist

world, the capitalist West in particular, can the Soviet ever hope to meet these pressing needs, and this the Soviet can accomplish only by lulling the West into sleep with high-sounding slogans of peaceful coexistence. The raw materials and factory products obtained in this manner not only will solve the economic problem but it will serve to strengthen its own and its satellites' military potential.

As seen from the statement of Khrushchev, by offering peaceful coexistence, the Soviet does not entertain the remotest intention of making any concessions or to retreat from its ideological aggression. This means the Soviet has no intention of giving up the idea of world conquest. It means it will continue to marshal its fifth columnists to disturb the peace of the free world in its effort to disrupt the democratic order of free peoples from *within*.

In short, should the free world accept the Soviet proposition in the fields of trade, armaments and diplomacy, even then the final result will be far from a lasting peace. In such a contingency, without doubt, the Soviet will be in a far more advantageous position to lull the free world and to benefit from its credulity. Such a result will be a distinct gain for the Soviet to further pursue its conspiracy.

On the other hand, the free world naturally will not refuse to extend moral aid to those peoples who have been enslaved by the Soviet, in their effort to shed off their shackles. The free world cannot remain altogether indifferent to the plight of those unfortunate peoples many of whom have sought shelter abroad. Neither its interests nor its conscience will tolerate such callousness. And even if the governments of the free countries deny their moral support to those enslaved peoples, the public opinion will never tolerate it. Whether or not it wants it, the free world will be forced to support these peoples to recover their freedom.

Consequently, in reality, neither the Communist world nor the free world will be able to abandon their ideological aims and become reconciled with the idea of living side by side. And even if the free world wanted or could write off the fate of Soviet-enslaved peoples, the Soviet will never cease conspiring against free peoples through its fifth columnists. This in turn will force the latter to resort to counter measures.

The conclusion is, peaceful coexistence on earth will be impossible and impracticable henceforth as long as the fundamental ideologies of the two worlds remain unchanged.

Motives and Possible Consequences Of Peaceful Coexistence

Despite the free world's inability or reluctance to become reconciled with the permanent enslavement of peoples under the Soviet regime, the specter of another world war this time waged through atomic weapons is so awesome that no man in his right mind would want to subject mankind and its civilization to its unimaginable ravages. For this reason, even if it were possible to insure a lasting peace at the cost of the slavery of one third of mankind, the governments of the free world in all probability would not hesitate to welcome it just so they could prevent the unprecedented catastrophe of a general war.

However, the free world's willingness alone is not enough. It is essential that the Soviet Government, too, shall manifest a genuine willingness to become reconciled with the idea of living peacefully side by side with the free world. Unfortunately, this is the very thing which can never be because nowhere and at no time, either in words or deeds, has the Soviet ever given proof that it is ready to give up its revolutionary conspiratory tactics to subjugate the entire world.

When we consider that before World

War II when she was comparatively weak, when she feared the outside world more than the outside world feared her, the Soviet did not respect her written and oral promises never to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries but on the contrary pressed her conspiratory activities with wanton abandon through her agents and fifth columnists, how can we expect her to put a stop to such activities now that she heads one of two of the most powerful states in the world?

It is quite likely that the Soviet dreads an atomic war no less than the free countries, because, as has been stated, it fully realizes that such a war will destroy both its country and its rule. But this eagerness to avoid a general war, at least for the present, is neither proof nor guarantee that the Soviet will relinquish its designs for world conquest, employing the same conspiratorial methods which it used before the last war when it was incomparably weaker militarily and economically than now.

The fact that the Soviet now proposes peaceful coexistence does not necessarily mean that it has any intention of leaving the free world alone. The offer of trade, disarmament and diplomatic agreements with the free world is designed to stall a general war for the time being, but never a sign that the Soviet will relinquish its aggressive aims. No matter how insistently this offer is pressed, far from showing any friendly attitude or change of disposition, it only serves as a means of obtaining definite advantages at the cost of the free world's credulity.

By trading with the free world the chief beneficiary will be the Soviet and her satellites. Diplomatic and military agreements with the free world will enable the Soviet to shackle her opponent in order to gain time to win military and economic superiority over him. On the other hand peaceful coexistence poses no obstacle to her subversive activities in the free world, to pro-

mote dissensions and to bore from within.

First let's take the matter of trade. It is quite true that the free world needs the Soviet trade, but the Soviet world needs the free world's trade infinitely more. As a matter of fact the Soviet and her satellites have very little to sell to the free world since their entire economy is geared to the production of armaments and what is left will scarcely suffice for essential needs of their population. Moreover, the machinery, the raw materials and the finished products which they buy from the West will go to strengthen the Soviet military machine. The free world has much to sell and assuredly would benefit greatly if the Soviet offered in exchange a commensurate value in goods.

The bitter experience of the past has proved, however, that while Soviet promises are lavish, the result has always been disappointing.

As to military and diplomatic agreements envisaged by peaceful coexistence, there is no indication that the Soviet will ever agree seriously to follow a policy of disarmament or the curtailment of armaments under effective international inspection. To date, all their offers, although highly attractive, have proved illusory and there is no reason to believe that henceforth they will be different. The Soviet avoids and will always avoid being subjected to effective and permanent international inspection as are willing the free countries, because it shuns the light and will be forced to continue in the dark to deceive the others and to shun its international commitments as it always had done whenever such commitments do not suit its interests.

Therefore, agreements with the Soviet in this area will be equally worthless.

If the free world is ever so gullible as to put faith in the Soviet's present offer of peaceful coexistence and signs treaties with her to this effect, the result, assuredly, will be disastrous. The Soviet commitments on disarmament or the outlawing of atomic

weapons will remain a dead letter while the free world will really be disarmed, especially psychologically, because it will lose its capacity for resisting the Communist conspiracy.

Indeed, even now when peaceful coexistence is but an empty talk, there are many people in the world, the United States included, who are reluctant to see any Communist danger on the home front. How much more such a state of mind will deteriorate once we sign treaties of coexistence?

A Changed Situation and New Tactics

There was a time, the first few years after the last war in particular, when the Soviet was not afraid of the free world. At that time America, the leader of the free world, had the atom bomb and could use the weapon in case of being attacked, but otherwise she was disarmed. The Soviet was not particularly worried over the use of this formidable weapon because she was sure America being a democratic country could not easily be the aggressor, and as long as the Soviet did not attack first, she was comparatively safe. Besides, having been America's ally during the war she had not completely lost the latter's sympathy. Lastly, beginning with the first days of President Roosevelt's administration and through the duration of the war Washington swarmed with Communist agents and fellow-travelers. In the ensuing few years these agents kept the Soviet fully informed in regard to the mood of the American people.

Of late, however, the situation seems to have changed perceptibly. From all signs, the Soviet is not so sure of her security as formerly.

First, the free West is much better organized and better armed than before, and is more conscious of the Communist menace. Second, in the Congress and American military circles there is persistent talk about a *preventive war*, something which was moot when the Soviet did not possess the

atom bomb. The reasoning behind this idea is that, while America has a commanding lead in atomic weapons and long range planes it is better to anticipate the enemy, destroy her power, and prevent her catching up with us and to deliver the initial mortal blow.

Third, now that the Soviet has acquired these weapons she no longer underestimates their destructive potential and realizes that, once they are used against her, they are capable of destroying her principal cities together with her rule.

Fourth, with the removal of the obstacles, the free West is on the verge of realizing the arming of Western Germany which will make a substantial addition to the West's already sufficiently imposing forces.

Of course the Soviet could easily insure her security against external danger once she relinquished her plan of world revolution and world conquest. But the Soviet cannot do this even if she wanted it. Therefore, she seeks other means of security for herself and her satellites — means which not only will permit her to adhere to her plans but will facilitate the realization of those plans without being forced to resort to a new war.

To this end, the Soviet's immediate aims are:

1 — To divide her enemies and to force them to fight among themselves with all possible means.

2 — To foil and to render impossible the rearmament of Western Germany and her union with the free West.

3 — To stop the West's plans for rearmament.

4 — To diminish, as much as possible, and even to completely dissipate her enemies' suspicions and apprehensions of her aggressive and conspiratorial aims.

To achieve these results the Soviet at present is employing three methods:

1 — To push forward her illusory plan of "peaceful coexistence."

2 — To push forward her ostensibly promising but in reality deceptive propositions of disarmament or the curtailment of armaments and equally illusory willingness for the outlawing of atomic weapons and the concomitant international supervision.

3 — To prevent the rearmament of Western Germany and her union with the free West, the Soviet offers illusory promises for the restoration of a united Germany on the one hand, and on the other, she assembles her satellites and poses new and stronger threats against the free West.

Unfortunately, we cannot say if the West fully comprehends the full extent of these new Soviet tricks. Few is not the number of the simple-minded and the gullibles, even in our leading circles, who believe that something is changed in the Soviet leadership and that a compromise may be made in order to insure more or less a tolerable peace. Others, while comprehending the deceptive nature of the Soviet propositions, deem it necessary seriously to consider them, and they do this in order to unmask the Soviet, to tear down the false front of peacemaker which she has used to mislead the naive and the gullible, to represent America as warmonger, and to rally around herself the so-called neutrals.

This is the reason why the West is so extraordinarily patient with the Soviet and submits her proposition to the serious consideration of the United Nations Assembly. This operation which will give no positive result, as has been the case in the past, will at least serve to expose the sham of Soviet's love for the peace.

As to the question of the rearmament and unification of Germany, once again the West is amenable to the idea of negotiation to deprive the Soviet of an additional propaganda weapon. Although it is difficult, if not impossible, to believe that the Soviet will ever come to an agreement with the West on the German question, the Western leaders are willing to give the matter one

last trial. But this they will do *after* the ratification of Western Germany's rearmament and not before, hoping that such arrangement will fortify their position and will enhance their bargaining power with the Soviet.

Yet, even in this case it is not likely that the Soviet will make real concessions in the question of Germany because she realizes that, conceding the West's slightest demands, such as the holding of free elections, will mean not only the loss of Eastern Germany, but losing her hold on the other satellites of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania and perhaps Bulgaria and Albania. Whereas, even political infants know that the Soviet objective is to conquer Western Germany and never to risk the loss of Eastern Germany. And when we consider that the West cannot afford to risk the loss of Western Germany, it will be impossible to come to an agreement with the Soviet even after the ratification of the latter's union with the West.

The Misleading Alternative And the Slippery Road

The political leaders of the West, under the pressure of public opinion, are beginning to show signs of serious interest in the Soviet-inspired idea of peaceful coexistence. Even such sceptics as Winston Churchill who until the death of Stalin was reluctant to believe in its possibility, are coming around to the belief that it is possible to come to an understanding with the successors of Stalin to establish a far more tolerable world situation than the present.

If this change of mind is partly the result of Stalin's successors' "milder" diplomacy, in a larger measure, no doubt, it is due to the popular panic which stems from the catastrophic nature of the hydrogen bomb in case of a general war.

It is a noteworthy fact that many, not excepting the Soviet's fiercest enemies, when speaking of the present insufferable

strain, voice the alternative of "either peaceful coexistence or annihilation."

This method of syllogization, however, is erroneous. If we accept this alternative, it may lead us to disastrous conclusions. If the result will be the weakening of the free coexistence is annihilation, we might go one step farther and say, "It is better to be deprived of our freedom and to submit to Soviet tyranny than to risk annihilation by precipitating a new war."

In other words, if we submit to peaceful coexistence with the Soviet without reservations and without effective guarantees, the result will be the weakening of the free world's resistance potential. And more, the disposition for appeasement and even of surrender will be stronger. People logically will say, "Is it worth resisting the Soviet when such resistance will lead mankind to a new world war, a war which will mean the end of mankind and civilization?"

In all probability the Soviet and her satellites are just as much afraid of a new war as the free world. But it is an equally plausible hypothesis that in the present "cold war," or the "cold peace" as some call it, the side which emerges the victor is the one which is *less afraid of a new war*.

Obviously the Soviet side (meaning of course the leaders) is less afraid and is more daring. The reason for this is that the Soviet leaders do not feel themselves restricted by the public opinion of their countries and are free to dare the riskiest without heeding the will of their peoples, whereas the leaders of the free world are dependent on the disposition and the will of their peoples and cannot act as freely as the Soviet leaders. This accounts why they are often forced to make dangerous concessions, concession which they never would make were it not for the pressure of public opinion.

Once the Soviet slogan of coexistence infiltrates the free world it will so inspire the public opinion with the tendency of ap-

peasement that whenever the Soviet creates new Koreas and new Indochinas, the governments of the free countries will not be able to resist. This time people will ask: "Is it worth risking an atomic war in order to save a small people or a small country in this or that remote part of the world?" Once this mentality takes root in the free world it will be very easy for the Soviet imperialists to whittle down all the vulnerable corners of the world one after another. The avalanche will continue to roll until the knife reaches the very bone of freedom's last outpost, the United States of America, when all hope of effective resistance is gone.

We must never allow ourselves to forget that on the eve of the last war a similar mentality prevailed not only among the vast masses of people but in governmental circles in Europe in regard to Nazi imperialism. Then, too, there were people who said, "Is it worth plunging the whole world into a war for the sake of a Danzig, the Rhineland, the Sudetenland or a little country like Czechoslovakia?" The result of such mentality was that the world was plunged into the new war far sooner, whereas, if the world had put up a stiff front right from the beginning, in all probability there would have been no war at all.

Today, when the Soviet has replaced the Nazi imperialism, a tired mankind, harassed by perpetual hot or cold wars, feels the need of peaceful coexistence more than ever before. And the Soviet is making the most of the situation. The Soviet lullaby of peaceful coexistence naturally will promote general indifference, apathy, carelessness and stultification — a general disposition of not breaking with the Soviet over small matters.

If the Soviet were sincere in her assurances there would be no great damage done from a similar psychological disillusionment. But even political infants must know now that peaceful coexistence with

the Soviet is an impossible thing and the idea is being agitated simply in order to lull the free world into a false sense of security, to force it to lower its guard, and one day to take it by surprise.

Some have advanced the idea that coexistence with the Soviet, far from being dangerous, will even be profitable provided the free West is well armed and alert. But that's just the thing which is most difficult to accomplish. If the danger of the present cold war or the continuation of the cold peace stems from the steadily growing psychological tension which is liable to explode any day, the illusive state of peaceful coexistence, on the other hand, may dangerously weaken the free world's alertness insofar as it pertains to our readiness and our vigilance on the home front.

A survey of the world happenings of the past two years is enough to convince one that the perpetual agitation of the idea of coexistence by the successors of Stalin has had sinister repercussions in the free countries, not only among the peoples but on the dispositions and the policies of their governments. There is a perceptible tendency not only in Europe and Asia, but even in America, to curtail armaments against the Communist menace abroad and to weaken the fight against the Communists on the home front.

Conclusion

Tired of the cold war even since the end of the last war the leaders of the free world naturally are eager to restore normal relations with the Soviet world. No matter how desirable this may be, however, there is not a single sign of proof which might lead us to believe that the Soviet dictators will relinquish their plan of world revolution nor will they abandon their subversive methods to achieve this aim. Even if they made such a promise there is no doubt that they will fool the free world once more as they have done until now.

When we consider the Soviet's behavior

in the early thirties, at a time when she was confronted with the combined attack of Nazi Germany and Imperialist Japan, how she did not hesitate to deceive President Roosevelt's administration from which she had great expectations in economic and military aid, how she kept up her underground activity in America despite her solemn treaty promises, how can we expect that the same Soviet, today infinitely stronger militarily and economically, will not repeat the same deception?

Those who have grasped the real nature of the Soviet take an entirely different view. Instead of restoring normal relations or subscribing to the idea of peaceful coexistence, they propose outright severance of relations with the Soviet. It would have been far better, of course, if the United States and other free countries had never recognized the Soviet and had refused to maintain any sort of relations with her right from the start. In that case this monstrous tyranny in all probability would have collapsed long since.

Now that the free world has maintained for long years not only diplomatic and trade relations but has extended substantial amounts of economic and military aid, enabling the Soviet to attain to her present powerful position, at a time when the Soviet, thanks to the tolerance and the short-sightedness of the free world has managed to organize a powerful force of fifth columnists in all parts of the world, an abrupt severance of trade and diplomatic relations will be almost impossible, if not exceedingly dangerous.

No one doubts that the embassies of the Soviet and her satellites have become nests of conspiracy and espionage. And it's equally true that closing up these embassies will be a great blow to the Communist network of conspiracy and espionage. Still, this will not put an end to Communist fifth columnists. The latter will find other means of

secret communication and will continue to be subsidized by the Soviet as they were accustomed to do before the Soviet was formally recognized.

Besides, severance of diplomatic relations under present conditions will greatly aggravate the present international tension to such extent that it will be impossible to prevent an elemental explosion in the form of a general war, something which everyone dreads.

On the other hand the diplomatic smile of Stalin's successors is beginning to prove far more deadly than Stalin's sullen diplomacy. That smile is more likely to mislead not only the gullible but even such tried and tested Western leaders like Winston Churchill. Responsible leaders of the free world fall for the illusion that by *negotiating* with Stalin's successors they can obtain important concessions although the latter have shown no indication that they are pursuing a radically different policy than was pursued by their master Stalin.

Whatever the result of the present diplomatic efforts towards peaceful coexistence, one need not be a prophet to predict even now that the Soviet will continue the cold war, albeit more cautiously, first by neutralizing and then winning over those free countries whose defence is difficult to maintain without plunging the world into a new global war.

Such vulnerable countries are: Southern Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Finland and Iran.

Needless to say the Soviet will spare nothing to achieve this aim, cajoling these countries on the one hand, and on the other threatening them, in an effort to disrupt their governments from within and take them over through their fifth columnists, without giving occasion to outside intervention.

The conclusion:

1 — Both free and Communist governments dread a new global war no less than

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their peoples, a war which will bring into play the use of strategic weapons of the atom and hydrogen bombs and other infinitely improved weapons of mass destruction.

2 — Peaceful coexistence between the two worlds is a futile thing just now and all efforts in this direction will prove fruitless.

3 — Just as the Communist governments believe that the capitalist countries carry in themselves the germs of inevitable dis-

integration and will eventually submit to Communism so the free world believes that the Communist countries are subject to the same vulnerability and sooner or later will collapse under either internal or external pressures, paving the way for the restoration of democratic orders.

Then, and only then, will all the nations be able to live in peace. Only then will peaceful cooperation of the nations become a reality in the world.



THE CHALICE OF ANTIOCH

*Here sits my Lord's plain Cup,
Cracked, worn, and firmly sealed
To the elaborate Chalice — shell
Commissioned by those fourth
Century faithful, who
Thought the Cup too common
To command respect or embody a tradition.*

*The Byzantine design,
Embossed grape laden vines,
In trefoil, tracing trinity
Around the Chalice bowl,
Ensnared the stripling Christ
And ten Apostles in
A volute snare of preconceived Hellenic form.*

*The Visitors who come
On retreat or ferreting
The Cloister's Catholic garnerings,
Aficionados of
Communion with antique
Sacrifice, do they see
The Chalice of Antioch or my Lord's Plain Cup?*

VIRGENE LEAGUE

ASPECTS OF ANCIENT ARMENIAN HISTORY

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It may seem presumptuous for a non-Armenian to deal with Armenian history, especially when his knowledge of the classical Armenian language is not what it should be, not to mention an almost total ignorance of modern Armenian. But it may be justified on the grounds of a belief which I have been trying to propagate for a long time — that one must study Armenian history in its proper perspective, as part of world history. Armenian classical books are not only sources for the history of Armenia but for knowledge about other peoples in the Near East, their history, customs, and religion. For example, the important work by Eznik of Koghb *Եզնիկի Երկնային Աշխարհը*, is of prime importance for a knowledge of Zoroastrianism and its sects. Likewise, it is essential to examine Greek, Latin, and Iranian sources, among others, for a study of ancient Armenian history, Latin, Arabic, and Persian for Mediaeval Armenian history, and Turkish and Russian for modern Armenian history. Armenia has much to tell the world, not as an isolated, unimportant local phenomenon, but as part of the general stream of world history and culture.

I do not wish to touch upon subjects which one may read in various books on Armenian history, such as the history of Adontz for ancient times¹, and the general histories of Grousset and De Morgan for

mediaeval and modern times.² Rather I wish to bring some new evidence to bear on a most important period of Armenian history, the time of the conversion of Armenia to Christianity. I do not wish to take part in the controversy about the origins of the Armenian people, the origins of the names "Armenia", and "Hayk", but I would like to emphasize the fact that Armenia was a well-established kingdom, if one may use this term, by the time of the "one world" of the Achaemenids in the 6th Century B.C. I do not wish to consider the questions whether the Armenians were related to the Phrygians and took over the defunct kingdom of Urartu by invasion from Asia Minor in the 7th Century B.C., which is probable. But what of Armenia before the invention of the Armenian alphabet and the conversion to Christianity in the 4th century A.D.?

One historian writes of this period, "The Armenian (language) was only a spoken language, without writing, throughout the centuries (before the invention of the Armenian alphabet). . . There exists no document, no inscription in the Armenian language, dating from the time of the kingdom (190 B.C.-193 A.D., the coming of the Arsacids), even in foreign characters."³ An Armenian numismatist told me there

¹ N. Adontz, *Histoire d'Arménie: Les origines du X^e siècle au VI^e (avant J. C.)* Paris, 1946.

² R. Grousset, *Histoire de l'Arménie*. (Paris, 1947). J. de Morgan, *History of the Armenian People* (Boston, 1947).

³ K. Aslan, *Etudes historiques sur le peuple Arménien* (Paris, 1928), 206, note 2.

were no Armenian coins before the kingdom of Sis in Cilicia was founded in the 11th century A.D. This view now must be revised, for we do have evidence that Armenian existed as a written language before the end of the 4th Century A.D.

To understand this, however, one must consider the historical situation in the entire Near East about the time of Christ. There were two *lingua francae* in use throughout this area — Aramaic, the heritage of the Achaemenid Empire, and Greek, the heritage of Alexander the Great. With Greek we are on surer ground, for Greek inscriptions have been found in Armenia, and all over the Near East. One may refer to the interesting inscriptions on the walls of the ruins of Garni not far from Erivan, to which I shall refer later.⁴ It is evident that educated Armenians knew Greek as a cultural language. But side by side we find Aramaic inscriptions, and I refer particularly to the inscriptions from the vicinity of Lake Sevan.⁵ One might conclude that Aramaic too was used as a cultural tongue by the Armenians, and this would be natural except for several curious facts. The Aramaic of the inscriptions is ungrammatical; it cannot be read as good Aramaic. One might accept the premise that the Armenians made mistakes in writing Aramaic, but then we look at other Aramaic inscriptions elsewhere and find similar curious mistakes in Aramaic grammar, and even non-Aramaic words in the vocabulary. I refer to inscribed gravestones in Georgia,⁶ potsherds from Nissa, in present day Turkmenistan, once the capital of the Parthians⁷, parchments from Avroman, Kur-

distan,⁸ and others. All are presumably written in Aramaic, but the common feature which they have, and the key to this puzzle, is that although they are written in Aramaic, they were all intended to be "read off" in the native language, Georgian, Iranian, Armenian. Thus we have here what may be called heterographic writing, but nonetheless what one might really designate as writing in Armenian, etc. For one would write MLK and read it ԹԱԳԱՒԱՐ (or ԱՐԲԱԾ if in western Armenia). The same is true, I submit, of the coins from Armenia with Aramaic letters on them.⁹ Although it was probably limited in use, we then do have Armenian written before the invention of the Armenian alphabet.

To come to this invention, and the acceptance of Christianity, one may say they go together. They both are also related to the important position of Armenia in the Near East which I shall discuss first. The Armenian historian Agatangelos speaks of Xosrov (Chosroes), king of Armenia at the time of the rise of Ardashir first king of the Sassanians about 225 A.D. He says, "Xosrov, king of the Armenians, who was second in the empire of the Persians because he was king of the Armenians, (which ruler) was the second (in rank) in the empire of the Persians".¹⁰ This is confirmed by the later history of the Sassanian Empire when the Persians ruled the country with an important official called a ԲԴԵԱՇԽ. It is important to remember that Armenia, under the Parthian Arsacid kings, enemies of the Sassanians, held out against

⁴ K. V. Trever, *Nadpis o postroenii armjanskoi kreposti Garni* (Leningrad, 1949), 40 pp.

⁵ Trever, *Očerki po istorii kultury drevnei Armenii* (Moscow, 1953), 167.

⁶ R. N. Frye, "Pahlavi Heterography in Ancient Georgia", *Archeologica Orientalia in memoriam Ernst Herzfeld* (N. Y. 1952), 89-101.

⁷ M. Diakonov, "Parthian administrative documents from South Turkmenistan", *Papers presented by the Soviet Delegation of the XXXIII In-*

ternational Congress of Orientalists (Moscow, 1954), Iranian section, 94-107.

⁸ H. S. Nyberg, "The Pahlavi Documents from Avroman," *Le Monde Oriental* 17 (1923), 182-230.

⁹ E. Thomas, "Early Armenian Coins", *Numismatic Chronicle* (1871).

¹⁰ Agat' angelos, *Patmutiun Hayoc*, ed. Ter-Mkrtdzean (Tiflis, 1909), 15, para. 18.

Խոսրով Բազաւորի Հայոց — որ էր Երկրորդ տէրութեան պարսից, զի որ Հայոց Բազաւոր էր նա էր Երկրորդ պարսից տէրութեան:

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Sassanian rule when all other Arsacid princes in the Parthian empire submitted to the new conquerors.

In Armenian sources relating to this period I had come across the expressions *ՄԵՐ ԹԱԳԱՒՈՐ ՀԱՅՈՑ* "Great king of the Armenians", and *ԹԱԳԱՒՈՐ ՄԵՐԱՅ ՀԱՅՈՑ* "King of Great Armenia." The first is understandable as a common attempt to glorify the person of the king, but the second is more interesting. The latter also appears in a Greek inscription from Garni mentioned above. In the imperial inscrip-

tion of Shapur I, king of Iran (241-267 A.D.) near Persepolis, telling of his capture of Valerian the Roman emperor, the expressions *LB' MLK' 'lwn'n* "great king of Armenia," and in another later inscription *LB' 'lwn'n MLK'* "king of Great Armenia", occur.¹¹ Later Persian writers speak of the *buzurg Armen i yan Shah*. This was no idle appellation, for I think we shall be able to show elsewhere that "Great Armenia" included much of what is today Rus-

¹¹ Cf. my forthcoming study on the "Foundations of Sassanian Iran".

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



PROF. RICHARD N. FRYE

The accompanying article comprehends the text of a speech delivered by Richard N. Frye, Associate Professor of Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard, January 30, in Watertown, Mass., under the sponsorship of the Cambridge Branch of the Armenian Relief Society. Prof. Frye was eloquently presented to the audience by Mrs. Anahid Kechichian, and we believe that her introductory words can most appropriately serve to introduce the young and brilliant Harvard savant to REVIEW readers:

"Many years ago, a young boy was walking down the street of a town in Illinois. A book in

the window of a book store attracted his attention. It was a beautifully illustrated copy of "Tamlulane" by Harold Lamb. The boy after a time saved up enough money to buy this book. He was so fascinated by what he read that he continued to read many other books on the East.

"In fact, when he entered college at the age of 15 he majored in history. His research led him to the study of ten to twelve languages and classical Armenian came last on this list. For it was at the graduate school at Harvard that Professor Richard N. Frye was virtually forced by the late Prof. Robert Blake, known to most of us here, to study the classical Armenian language, the *krapar*, in order to study Armenian History in the original.

"This knowledge became invaluable no doubt, in connection with his research on Middle Eastern History and related subjects.

It would take too long to relate here all of Professor Frye's scholastic achievements, but I would like to give you some idea of his education and experience:

"He received his Bachelor of Arts at the University of Illinois in 1939.

"He continued studies at Princeton and Harvard for his Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy.

"During the war he worked with the Near East and Russian Sections in research and analysis in Washington and in Near East.

"After the war he was elected a Rockefeller Fellow and went to the University of London, School of Oriental Studies.

"Since 1948 Dr. Frye has been Associate Professor of Middle Eastern Studies.

"Among his publications we may find *Turkey and Iran and the United States of America*, *A History of the Nation of the Archers*, by Grigor Akanc, Armenian Text and Translation; *A Medieval History of Bukhara*, transl. from the Persian.

"Prof. Frye is a member of the American Oriental Society, The International Oriental Society of Istanbul and the Philological Society, London."

sian and Iranian Azerbaijan, as well as present Armenia and eastern Turkey. This is a special and involved problem which cannot be discussed here, but the main sources for this are non-Armenian, a further indication of their importance in Armenian history.

It is well-known that Armenia was the first sovereign state to adopt Christianity. It was an important event in world history when this happened, for "Great Armenia" had a special political importance in the struggle between the Roman and Sassanian empires. Some forms of Zoroastrianism had a strong hold in Armenia at the time of the conversion to Christianity about 305 A.D. Now most of the Christians in the Roman Empire in the east used Greek as the church language, though other languages such as Syriac, were not proscribed. In the Sassanian Empire, however, the Greek language of the enemies of Iran was not easily tolerated and there the Christians used Syriac. So the earliest priests in Armenia in their services used either Greek, in the part of Armenia under Roman influence, or Syriac in the part under Sassanian influence. Now the invention of an Armenian alphabet by Mesrop and Sahak in order to read and teach the Gospels in a language the people could understand is also well-known. It took place about 404 A.D. But the political implications of this invention hitherto have not been stressed.

The circumstances of the adoption of the new alphabet are not too well known, and I quote from Kevork Aslan, who writes: ¹² "Seeing the difficulties which their project encountered, the two collaborators (Mesrop and Sahak) decided to go to Roman Armenia (from Persian dominated Armenia). Coldly received by the authorities and the Greek clergy, they turned to the patriarch of Constantinople and the emperor. A deputation, to which Mesrop belonged, went to the court and obtained

orders for the governor (of Roman Armenia) to recognize the authority of the patriarch over the Armenians, and to permit the founding of schools to teach the national language. The imperial rescript even gave subventions for the work of the prelates." Mesrop was coldly received by the Greek clergy because his plan for an Armenian alphabet, and writing the Gospels in Armenian, was a threat to the influence of the Greek clergy in non-Greek speaking areas. Of course, the Greek church did not have the bias about Greek as the Roman church had about Latin. The project was warmly received by the emperor because he saw the political implications, the possibility of winning over Armenians from Persian-dominated Armenia. He also recognized the need for concessions to the Armenians since they were on the frontier of the empire and vital to its protection. The concept of "Great Armenia" still had importance in Byzantine thinking. There was no need to make similar concessions to other peoples in the empire. A parallel for this political move can be found in later history, the conversion of the Slavs. One may over-emphasize the resemblance, but nonetheless the parallel is instructive.

In the 9th Century A.D. Constantine and Methodius, the missionaries to the Slavs, were sent from Byzantium to what is present-day Czechoslovakia, to the kingdom of "Great Moravia". Note the parallel with "Great Armenia." From 863 to 867 A.D. the brothers worked there and formed the Slavic alphabet later called Glagolitic. Now Moravia was a bone of contention between the Greek and Latin churches at this time, and one may assume that it was the political astuteness of the Byzantines which caused them to approve the creation of a Slavic alphabet, with translation of the Gospels into the Slavonic tongue. For this concession the Greeks won the Slavs for the Eastern Greek Church, while the inflexibility of the Latin Church which

¹² op. cit., 208.

would not countenance any language but Latin as the church language in the West, lost the Slavs for the Church of Rome. This, of course, is not the whole story but the alphabet was an important factor, with, of course, added political implications. Constantine supported his stand from Holy Writ, saying "Tell me, do you think that God is helpless and cannot bestow the equality of languages and peoples or that he is envious and will not give it?"¹³ The parallel between the creation of the Slavic alphabet and the Armenian is obvious.

The creation of an alphabet, and recognition of Armenian as a language of the church and of ritual together with Greek and Latin, gave new life to the Armenian people. It is safe to say that this paved the

way for the literary and cultural flowering in the fifth and sixth centuries A.D.; and laid the basis for the continuity of the Armenian language and culture to the present day.

Needless to say today in this country, only the recognition by the Armenians of the importance of their past — their language, literature, history — will keep this valuable heritage alive. I emphasize even more strongly that only the realization by the Armenian community of America, of the rightful place and relevance of the study of the Armenian language, literature, and history, on the world stage, and specifically in our universities and centers of learning, can save Armenia from vanishing from the hearts of the young. I beseech the Armenian community not to withdraw into itself, but to show the world what Armenia has to offer to the world.

¹³ For this, and preceding, information, I have drawn on the article by R. Jakobson, "St. Constantine's Prologue to the Gospels," *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly* (1954), 19-20



I REACH SIBERIA

ARMEN SANINIAN

Our stop had lasted two days. Here they gave us each a slice of muddy bread and a glass of hot water. When I received my share of the bread I did not know how to treat it. I kept it in my pocket, then took it out, looked at it, and again hid it in my pocket. Despite the intense hunger which was torturing me I did not dare eat it. A childish fear, or the fear of a starving man, to be exact, that this would be my last slice of bread I would get made me sensitive of its preservation. I wanted to keep it in my pocket always, to feel its presence, to rejoice in it, and to live in its hope.

Ten times I took it out of its hiding and again replaced it, and each time I took it out I plucked a crumb and threw it into my mouth. When the last time I took it out I was horrified to see that my bread had diminished to the size of an acorn.

I started to search my pockets thinking a small chunk had been broken off and was still there, but I found nothing. Without noticing it I had consumed two thirds of my bread but I had not realized it. Despite my age I felt like crying just like the child who finds a precious toy in his dream but is disillusioned when he wakes up.

After the handout they opened the door of our wagon and, reading the names one by one, they brought out all the slaves. They had never done this thing before. From the opened door we could see long lines of slave freight trains standing side by side, the guards walking on the tops of the cars with ready rifles. Beyond it we could see nothing except a sea of sunlight which bathed the vast expanse and a part of the blue sky. A small beam of these rays penetrated through the open door and hit-

ting the opposite wall clung to it like a golden rug, creating an unusual shadow for the rest of us slaves. Our mobile cell had assumed a festive air by this chip of the sun which, with one wet eye, was smiling bashfully.

The slaves whose names were called stepped out one by one. Only then, as they stepped into the light, one could see plainly their pinched, jaundiced and punished faces, shrunk from the intense suffering.

Half of the occupants' names were called and yet I did not hear my name, nor did I care. My mind was wholly preoccupied with the sun whose presence was thrilling me through and through. My eyes were fixed on the outside. I was thinking of the vast expanse beyond the trains which I presumed should be wide open spaces, fields covered with a green carpet, bathed in the sunrays. Perhaps a river or a small stream gently flowed through that plain, whose silvery waters scintillated under the sun-rays. I imagined its banks were lined with stooping willow trees, and farther off a green forest on this side of which nestled a small village, artless yet mysterious. Then, on one side of the river I imagined ripe fields, and on the other side closely cropped meadows where, probably, the cows browsed lazily, chewing the cud.

I did not want to visualize a city. I was afraid of the city since cities had jails.

Only a few directed the operation of emptying the wagons one of whom was a common soldier. Standing there beside the open wagon door, he was watching us who still were inside with a look of pity. At times he helped the ghost slaves who were

having difficulty in stepping down the wagon.

"Where are we now?" I whispered to him, believing I would get an answer.

He looked around cautiously and when he saw no one could hear us he whispered back, "We are in Siberia."

"Siberia?"

"Yes."

"And such sun in Siberia?"

"Today is the first time."

"What month is this?"

"The end of June."

"Is this the beginning of spring here?"

Suddenly we were interrupted. "Ivanov, everyone is out. You may shut the door now," barked the reader of the list, with a sharp look at my conversant. The soldier blushed and without looking at me hurried to close the door.

There was complete darkness inside again, no sun anymore. And yet they did not call my name. At first I thought I was all alone but I soon found out that there were seven of us. We were alarmed over our isolation, imagining a thousand and one sinister things for which we could find no explanation. One hour later the door of our wagon was opened again and in were herded about ten entirely new slaves.

The newcomers told us that we were now at a central Siberian station where all slave transporting trains make their stop. Our isolation and their joining with us, in their opinion, meant a reallocation of their slaves for their respective destinations. There are hundreds of concentration camps in Siberia all of which are fed from this central station by various rail lines. In addition, they are transported via the river, the sea, or on foot.

They thought we would be kept here for another two days for new arrivals of slaves, to complete the allocations. Their explanation made sense to us so I went to my place to lie down and wait.

One of the newcomers selected his place

next to me. "What nationality are you?" he asked me.

"I am an Armenian."

"Armenian? Our entire train was practically filled with Armenians."

"What happened to them?" I asked with a start.

"I don't know. They separated us from them. It looks like they all are going to the same place."

"Did they give you any food on the way?"

"Accidentally at times."

"How did you find my compatriots?"

"Very bad. Few of them were healthy. The rest were sick and wasted from the cold and the hunger."

Once again the door opened and this time they called my name and that of another.

I felt inwardly glad, hoping they would make me join my compatriots.

Siberia and Sun

When I stepped out of the wagon it was the first time that I set foot on Siberian soil. "Siberia is just as much a part of Russia," old Russians used to sing. Unutterably cold, a wild nature, and unattractive. Endless woods grown on marshlands. The only trees are thorny fir trees. There are berries under the trees which are more sour than vinegar. The woods are filled with man-shunning, surly and evil bears. There are rivers which are unlike other rivers, wide as the sea, covered with a heavy coat of ice for nine months. Only two months they are free of the ice, and even then you don't know which way the water flows. One does not want to look at these rivers one moment. It is so depressing. It seems it is not water which flows through them but human tears. There is no land on the face of the earth where so much tears has been shed. Siberia is a land of tears.

But my first day in Siberia was sunny, an exceptionally mild sun. So plain, childlike, tender like a cluster of flowers, so tender that one would think it was artificial. The

warmth in it was so little that when the shadow of my accompanying guards fell upon me I would shiver.

I was very surprised when they did not herd me in a new wagon. There were thousands of wagons in this place and teeming activity. Countless Chekists and hundreds of soldiers were busy opening wagon doors and disgorging their human cargo, or herding in new contingents. Through the opened doors I could see inside filthy human piles, multitudes of living ghosts. I had been separated from them only a few moments and yet I was seeing them for the first time. I felt I had never been with them, never shared their life.

Looking from the outside the inside of the wagons seemed very mysterious. It seemed they were entirely new worlds, who knows whence, or from what bottom of the ground they had emerged? The occupants of the inside were likewise entirely strange. They were not from this world. They did not impress one as ordinary men, but as half-men or manlike creatures who by some miracle had been dropped on this earth, with some evil intention seemingly, and whom the vigilant police had assembled and jailed.

And it was a good thing that the police had done. These hairy, filthy creatures on whose faces was the stamp of intense suffering, pain and hunger, and insatiable greed, who knows what a scourge they would be to the "happy and carefree" citizens of the country?

Outside it was wonderful. There was sun. They were escorting me alongside of hundreds of wagons, without forcing me in or preventing the beneficence of the sun. My mind was focused on this one point. I could not comprehend the freedom I was enjoying. They could easily lead me through the shadows so that I would not feel the sun. They could order me to shut my eyes. But they did none of these things.

I kept walking, bathed in the mild rays

of the sun, feeling its warmth on my waist, on my shoulders and in my blood. Such luxury was too much for a slave. Perhaps they had made a mistake in allowing me such a luxury.

We passed by the rows of trains and finally reached a spot far away from the station. The tall, long wooden wall prevented me from seeing beyond. Here were huddled a multitude of about two hundred slaves, seated in long lines on the ground. It was so pleasant to sit under the sun and get warmed after having spent so many days in the cold, especially since I had nothing to think about. What was there to think about for a man who was half-man half-animal? The day was dying when they ordered us to move. We walked along the long wall toward a station building in the distance. The wall came to an end and still we had not reached the station. When we came out into the open we could see the city beyond.

Again the jail, I thought, and the picture filled me with nausea. My position in this crowd was peculiar in that, as far as I could learn, these men came from comparatively nearby places and whose interrogation had not been completed. I was alarmed that I might be subjected to a new interrogation and new tortures, and the thought made me forget the sun.

Why Don't They Pity Us?

It was a strange city we entered. The houses, although habitable, seemed desolate and dismal like the stables, notwithstanding the fact that the window sills were covered with countless flower pots.

The citizens, too, were dismal-looking, just like the houses. Uncommunicative. The faces of the women in long queues in front of the shops, likewise looked like those of slaves, and if anything, a little more so. In the universal misery each person was looking for a particle of commiseration or pity from the other. I looked to

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my right and left, searching the faces of those citizens for a sign of curiosity for my misfortune, the ruination of my youth.

I was doomed to disappointment. The passers-by, those standing at the doorways, and even the scanty children would look at us but they would not see us. There was no curiosity in them. They even seemed to ignore our existence. Thus, our company of slaves numbering in hundreds marched through the streets and no one paid us any attention.

To me who had always been capable of losing all restraint in my joy at the wedding of another, or feeling sorry when a man lost his lamb, such behaviour was offensive. Only later I learned that the Siberian is not to be blamed for his indifference toward the misfortune of others because his senses had been dulled by the sight of driven slaves for three hundred and sixty-six days in a year.

In passing along the black market I saw peddlers of womens' clothes, long lines of rags on the ground, exhibiting them to the prospective customer. There were men with a few chunks of black bread hidden under their shirts or aprons, exhibiting it to the passer-by and again hiding it when they espied the police from far off.

All this proved to me that it was not after my arrest that the situation had been changed, on the contrary, it had only deteriorated. And yet I envied these "free" men and wished I was one of them, even if miserable and hungry, just so I was free. Free from slavery.

No Room in the Jails

After having lined us up in front of the prison gate the guards lit cigarettes and waited. Presently the captain of the guard went in and a moment later came out accompanied by someone else who apparently was the warden or his assistant. The latter, the minute he saw us, clamped his head in his hands and exclaimed in desperation,

"Where in hell can I lodge all these people, where?"

"That's your business," the captain of the guards retorted. "In an hour I shall be at the station to receive new contingents of prisoners."

"I have no room, believe me I have no room. My jail is bursting over from the accumulation of this scum. They are packed like sardines."

"Make room for them somehow."

"Somehow?" the warden groaned, "I get more than ten companies each day and each time I must make room somehow. I might make room for a few by taking them home and making them lie down beside my wife, but what shall I do with these hundreds? I tell you there is no room to drop a needle."

"How long will it be before the new jail is completed?"

"How should I know? It's the lack of materials which is holding it up. We have bitten off more than we can chew."

"Well, what shall we do with these men? Shall we lodge them at the people's homes?" the Captain asked laughing.

"Come in with me a moment. I will call up the Cheka."

A few moments later the big doors of the prison were opened and they checked us in one by one. When the operation was over the man who read our names warned us: "Prisoners, I want you to know that the prison is filled with the 'Wets' and the 'Dry's'. There will be robbing, looting, and even killings. To play safe, deposit your money and valuables at the office. Otherwise the prison authorities will not be responsible for what happens afterwards."

The prisoners were silent.

"Follow me," ordered a second man who was standing beside the first as he started to run. We ran after him like a flock of sheep. The office courtyard was separated from the prison courtyard by a high wall at the center of which was a door. The

soldier standing guard at the door let us in then closed the door.

The square-shaped prison yard was filled with "recreationist" prisoners, a multitude the like of which I had never before seen — men of every age, beginning with teenagers to withered old men. But these were not ordinary men, they were strange creatures. First of all, nine out of ten were naked, and the scanty clothing which they wore consisted of old linen which had been refitted for "recreation." From among the hundreds of this herd, one had a pair of breeches, tattered and jet black with dirt, another had a shirt of the same color but naked below the waist. There were some lucky ones who had both, and there were those who wore a jacket for a shirt but had no underwear.

I saw a fifteen year old lad who was completely naked but he sported a broad-rimmed European hat sinking to his ears, while his feet were shod with a pair of long-necked military boots.

All of them were dirty like buffaloes wallowing in the marsh. They had hungry jaundiced faces and the eyes of famished evil beasts. As we entered inside, a part of them were huddled against the wall, warming under the rays of the dying sun. The others were fighting among themselves. Some were seated on the ground, playing cards, flying at each other's throats and noisying the place.

The Bathroom

The Sergeant was standing next to the door inside the yard, watching us come in. Presently the "recreationists" surrounded us with a curiosity which is characteristic of a pack of starved wolves toward a deserted flock of sheep. To be exact, there was really no curiosity on their faces but the elation of a beast who has seen his prey. All their faces brightened and their eyes shone. I could even hear the chattering of their teeth from inner emotion.

One step from me two naked youths were talking to each other, their eyes always fixed on us.

"I told you we would have some new preys today," one of them said, rubbing his hands together I know not whether from joy or from the cold.

"Yes, just so we too get a share of it," the other replied.

"We will. I have already chosen our prey."

"Which one?"

"That one," the lad without underwear pointed a finger.

I pressed my tin can — my entire wealth — under my arm and asked, "You mean me?"

"No," he said, "the one next to you."

I turned around and saw beside me a giant of a prisoner whose clothes were comparatively new, holding a handbag. Apparently he had been arrested only lately.

"What are these brats saying?" he asked.

"One of them has set his eyes on you and wants to devour you," I explained.

Startled, he started to blink his eyes. "Are there cannibals in this prison?"

"It looks like it."

"Come on. Let's go!" The Sergeant blew his whistle and started to run. We ran after him surrounded by the "recreationists." The two naked youths elbowed their way toward us, pushed me aside, and pounced on the giant. They threw him on the ground, grabbed his handbag and started to strip him of his clothes.

"Help! Help!" the man cried. "Help! Help!" the cries echoed from all sides. But our Sergeant kept running while we raced after him. Cries, screams, and groans all around. It seemed a storm had swept over the forest.

Presently a considerable body of the "recreationists" cut across and having reached the Sergeant, encircled the entire vanguard of the new prisoners. We came to a sudden halt. There began a universal,

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savage looting. It was no miracle that I escaped the looting because I had absolutely nothing. My shoes had no strings, my breeches were tattered rags, the coat of my jacket was so worn that in spots one could see the inner lining. The only valuable object I had was my tin can but no one paid any attention to it.

On the other hand the "recreationists" thought I was one of them because none of the newcomers was so shabbily dressed as I was. The inspector and I, standing side by side, were watching the massacre. I was stunned by the sight. Hundreds of "recreationists" were attacking the newcomers, in singles or two's, seizing their articles, stripping their coats, their jackets, their trousers, their shoes and even their underwear. Many of the newcomers, taken by surprise, practically offered no resistance and those who tried to resist were soundly beaten and subdued. Others, cowed by the sight of pointed knives, surrendered their clothes.

The cause of the newcomers' misfortune was not the lack of unity but the fact that they were hopelessly outnumbered. Besides, none of us expected a like disaster. We only were waiting for our turn to enter our cells.

The Sergeant and I were watching the disgusting sight. Shouts, cries, screams and a mass stirring. Men fell and rose again, surged forward and receded like a stormy sea. The Sergeant was smiling.

"Why don't you do something to stop this carnage?" I asked him indignantly.

He saw me for the first time. "What can I do?" he replied. "I can only fire on prisoners who are running away."

"I don't ask you to fire on them. Just scatter these looters."

"Who are you to be telling me what to do?" he barked at me, then he blew his whistle.

It seemed the Sergeant's whistle was the

signal to stop the looting. A moment later the "recreationists" moved away with their loot. Just then a few jailors stepped out of the office, their hands on their pistols.

"What's the matter?" their chief asked of our Sergeant.

"It's these brats again. They made things unpleasant for the citizens," the Sergeant smiled mysteriously.

"Drive them into their cells," the Chief ordered his guards. To drive the looters into their cells meant the loot was their legal property. The looted who fortunately were few as compared with the rest surrounded the Sergeant. Some of them were completely naked and shivering from the cold.

"Citizen Sergeant, order them to return our clothes."

"Who picked your clothes?"

"How should I know?"

"And how should I know?" the Sergeant grinned.

"You don't have to know the real culprits," I interposed. "Instead of sending them back to their cells, line them up here and the looted can easily recover their clothes."

"Why aren't you in your cell?" he snarled at me.

"I have no cell as yet."

"Are you one of these?"

"Yes."

"Where are you taking these men?" he asked the Sergeant.

"To their baths."

"Take them away."

The Sergeant started to run. There was the smell of dirt, dampness and mockery at the door of the "Bath." As I was entering inside, a filthy attendant dipped into his pail and poured a ladleful of liquid over my head. The liquid spread over my face and burned my eyes. The liquid was soap.

THE ATONEMENT

(An old country story)

YEROUKHAN

With a supreme effort not to betray his inner emotion, his head erect, his sharp-pointed gray mustache twisted upwards at both ends like that of a proud complacent youth, Copernicus *Effendi* Miraseyidian slowly stepped out of his carriage which had stopped in front of the gate of the Armenian national cemetery of Shishli in Istanbul. It was a hot afternoon of Monday of *Astvatatzin* — the church holiday dedicated to the Mother of God. As he stepped out he ran his fingers over the collar of his immaculate tail coat, brushing off ever so gently any presumable dust particles. Only he who was familiar with this peculiar gesture could tell that the man was trembling from a terrific inner storm as he nearly collapsed under the arch of the cemetery gate. He recovered his poise and advanced with firm, proud steps, and although no one was watching him, he shuttled his sunken small black eyes right and left lest someone saw him. Inside the cemetery garden the serene, artistic surrounding lent him courage and he advanced upwards through the central artery with a curiosity which was almost casual, and as if he was seeing something entirely new, he surveyed the pointed, clean marble tombstones with wondering, pious and reverential eyes. From the remote corners of the deathland a rustle was heard, mournful like the last sobbings of all who lay under the earth. Over the vast expanse of the cemetery could be seen countless mourners who had come to kiss the soil beneath

which lay the decaying and wormy bones of caravans of loved ones.

He straightened up with a sense of satisfaction. The awesome desolation of the deathland seemed dispelled by the presence of countless visitors and he felt assured that he would be unnoticed in a visit which he had dreaded for long years.

A man of the business world he had always felt a sort of revulsion for the world of the dead, having avoided it as much as he could. He had such an innate aversion for death whose very characterization by others as the "Beyond" he regarded as an absurd paradox that he never wanted to think about it or wrestle with it, fiercely fighting the idea of having to depart from this world one day. In his circle of friends every one knew that he never attended a funeral and no one was offended when, on the death of a friend or a relative, he always expressed his sympathy with flowers.

"It's my weakness, what can I do? I can't help it. My heart won't stand the strain. I will be sick," he would apologize piously.

However some of his old friends, without insisting upon it, used to remark that Copernicus Effendi, before he had attained to his present position, often used to attend funerals without showing any signs of violent excitement. It was during the past eight or ten years that the sudden change had come upon him. But since his behavior involved no pressing national or public

issue, people had ignored it or had been indifferent to it.

During the past ten years he had never attended the funeral of his relatives, had never gone to church or to the cemetery but had spent the period of mourning in the solitude of his home. When his sister died he even had gone to his office where, he mumbled some broken words of sympathy for his sister as he signed the papers of his clients. This peculiar behavior having aroused the curiosity of some clients, Copernicos Effendi's agent Ghookas Agha, a man of medium height with an *Azizieh Fes* which was the prevalent Turkish headgear, and with jet black hair firmly patched to the back of his head and against his temples, his back bent low from incessant bowings before men for long years, would apologize for his boss in a touching and anguished voice, saying: "Effendi loves his sister so much that if he permitted himself to mourn her loss, the ordeal would affect his mind." And the listeners commiserated with him deeply.

He had not even attended his mother's funeral. His elder brother, his sister, her husband, and another sister had departed from this world, all deprived of their brother's post mortem comforting presence.

"If I go as far as the cemetery," Copernicos Effendi once had said, "they would have to throw me in the grave and bury me alive, too."

This affectionate pose toward his loved ones not only had not surprised his acquaintances but, actually, it had enhanced their high regard for his moral code.

And now, ten years later, when he was surrounded by desolation, when he was all alone in the midst of death's inexorable and indiscriminate harvest, Copernicos Effendi at last had come to observe the requiem of Asdvadzadzin, to visit his dead ones and to have the customary pastoral benediction pronounced upon them.

His agent Ghookas who had been his

proxy in all the funerals, who had watched the covering of the bodies with earth to the proper depositing of the last floral wreath, and who, on that solemn day had yielded his place to his master, even at that moment Copernicos Effendi had asked a trivial accounting of him, "By the way, what was that ten *Paras* you gave the man for?"

"At the last moment I gave the gate keeper a ten cent *Bakhshish*," Ghookas had explained.

"We must go easy on those *Paras*. It is not easy to make money." Copernicos Effendi had admonished his agent.

For some time, however, Ghookas Agha had noticed that his master was undergoing a change of disposition. He had become more preoccupied with his thoughts. From time to time his small beady eyes would freeze on some point and he would have sudden convulsions. And finally, of late, something which was unheard of, he had asked Ghookas Agha if he ever visited the cemetery and inspected the graves. "What is the condition of our family lot in the cemetery? Does the caretaker water the flowers? Does he clean and polish the tombstones?" Naturally Ghookas Agha had been taken by surprise and had mumbled somethings, because none of these things had been done.

"Ghookas," Copernicos Effendi had warned sternly, "after this you will visit the cemetery once a month and see that everything is in good order. Have two keys made and keep one with you always."

"Is this man losing his wits?" Ghookas had mumbled to himself, straightening the hair on his temples.

However, his surprise was changed into astonishment when one day, the Sabbath of Astvatzatzin, before leaving his office, Copernicos Effendi summoned his agent and said to him:

"Ghookas, tomorrow morning go to the pastor and tell him that on Monday, in the afternoon, I will be at the Cemetery

of Shishli for the blessing of my dead. Tell him to be there."

"God keep us," Ghookas Agha mumbled under his nose, completely bewildered by the strange order.

And now Copernicos Effendi had come to the cemetery for the customary blessing of his departed relatives. As he turned around the arched tomb of the "National Benefactor" he came face to face with the tomb of the Meraseyedian family. He peeped inside cautiously; the priest had not arrived as yet. This ill fortune extracted a few drops of perspiration on his forehead. The grave was encircled by an iron lattice-work. Five tombs, three of them closely knit and the other two a little to the rear, covered the ground. They were square marblestones, the plainest of the tombs. A few trees, short and slender, apparently planted only recently, was the only luxury. In the midst of magnificent stones carefully decorated, the Meraseyidian lot stood out in its simplicity and deserted look.

Copernicos Effendi took out the key from his pocket, opened the gate and stepped inside. He was beside his loved ones now. His blood, congealed under the skin which despite his fifty-five years gave him a youthful flame, vanished a moment, making his face deathly pale. That cruel, sturdy man was trembling now. With slow, sluggish steps he approached the three tombstones, and as if to prevent his falling, with his two hands he leaned against the marble. His eyes bleary from the emotion, he looked at the inscription. It was dedicated to his mother:

"Here rests Mrs. Nazeni Meraseyidian who departed from this valley of tears at the ripe age of seventy, immaculate and virtuous. O passerby, give a tear drop to her immortal memory."

This beautiful poetic creation of the pastor of Yeni Kapou shook Copernicos Effendi to his foundations. Under his searching look it was his mother who was being

described, the letters became lines to portray her white thin body, just as he had seen her the last time on her death bed, the evening he had returned home with Ghookas Agha who invariably spent the night there whenever someone died. The old woman had passed out during the day, without a cry, extinguished like a candle. They immediately had sent a messenger to the office to announce the calamity. Having opened his cash drawer, Copernicos Effendi was handling his gold and banknotes at the moment when Ghookas Agha suddenly announced the sad news.

"Effendi, may your mother's days be yours!" This was the customary way of announcing a death, the presumption being that God would add the shortened days to the life of the survivor — a most refined and Christian way of announcing a death.

The merchant, his hand still in his cash drawer, had turned about and stared at his agent over his spectacles: "Are you sure? Who brought you the news?"

"The news is authentic alright. May her days be added to yours, Effendi."

Copernicos Effendi had dismissed the news with a grunt and again busied himself with his stocks. That evening when he returned home at the customary hour, he found the lifeless body of his mother lying on her bed.

And now the picture was being revived in living lines on the tombstone in the cemetery. Poor woman! How much she had suffered at the hand of Copernicos during the last years of her life — this plotting hypocrite from childhood — all because of his cunning and smooth operations. Greedy and unscrupulous, this man had shortchanged his mother of her paternal inheritance by weaving around that pious timid woman a web of terror and deceit. He remembered how one night he even had made a gesture of attacking her with his heavy cane, howling, "You will let me have your inheritance. Do you hear?"

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"I'll have your inheritance." His sister, an old maid of forty, had fainted as she tried to intervene between the two. The next day Nazeni Hanum had thrown the key to her cache in his face and the son, like a hyena, burying his snout in the treasure box, had devoured the jewelry and the certified bonds valued at hundreds of pounds sterling.

And what should we say of his poor sister whose entire life had been a living martyrdom at the hands of her brother? She had been unable to find a husband although she had a dowry of one thousand pounds. With his vile machinations Copernicos had frustrated all proposals of her marriage in order to hang on to her thousand pounds. The girl had grown up, her hair was graying, and one day terrified by the spectre of being thrown out into the street and becoming the cynosure of a great scandal, she had surrendered her dowry to her brother in escrow. Copernicos had swallowed up that money too. There, next to his mother's tome, stood the tomb of his sister Iskoubie Meraseyidian with the burning inscription which began: "This is the resting place of," and after the customary eulogy, ending with the words: "was transferred here after a virtuous virgin life." Mademoiselle Iskoubie, after surrendering her entire fortune to her brother, had been reduced to the role of a maid servant. A stroke of the brain had taken her away before the death of her mother.

Stooping low, Copernicos Effendi leaned over the tombstone of his sister as if in the act of listening. Suddenly he recoiled a step. He was hearing the same sobbings when the day she turned over her wealth to her brother. Pale and trembling, he looked about him lest some furtive eyes were watching him. Fortunately no one noticed him since each visitor to the cemetery was wrapped up in his own grief.

He again approached the stones, his beady eyes fixed on the inscriptions. To

the right of his mother lay his elder brother Hovhannes Effendi Meraseyidian who was the founder of the firm now controlled by Copernicos. A good, generous upright man, he had lent a helping hand to his brother, had taken him into his employ and eventually had made him a partner. Copernicos Effendi, cunning and resourceful, had undermined the credit of the establishment through a series of fraudulent transactions; through the collaboration of a few "respectable" accomplices he had signed false papers putting the institution under a heavy indebtedness, and finally had forced its bankruptcy. The shock had proved fatal to Hovhannes Effendi. A stroke had confined him to his bed for two years after which he had expired. That good trusting man, after comprehending the full weight of his brother's treachery, infuriated in his paralysis, had shouted in his face: "You beast! You have ruined our home!"

But, even before his brother's death, Copernicos Effendi had restored the firm to its original prestige and was accepted on the market as a most reliable, honest and respectable merchant.

After his brother's death, Martiros Effendi, the husband of his married sister Akaby Gulerian, carried away by his brother-in-law's lavish and deceitful promises, had put at his disposal his entire fortune which amounted to one thousand pounds and had become his partner. Before the year was over Martiros Effendi had been thrown out of the firm, and although he had carried his case to the courts, finally had succumbed to his sufferings and had died a miserable death. As a favor to him he had been buried in the Meraseyidian lot through the intercession of Chookas Agha.

And all the members of that family had fallen one by one, struck down by this man, giving up their all so that he could amass a fabulous wealth and an enviable position for himself. And now he was surrounded by all these victims, robbed, ruined and forced

to die by his own hand. After having shunned them for years, after having tried to forget their memory, he had finally been dragged here like the convict who is led to the gallows.

Standing there amid these hideous tombstones on whose smooth white color he noticed smudges of blood, he was trembling bodily. The engraved human skulls at the bottom of the stones, supported by long cross-shaped bones as the demonic emblem of mysterious death, seemed to come to life, stare at him from the abysmal sockets of their eyes, and mock him with the chatter of their dried jawbones. Voices came from the depths of the grave, mournful cries and dying groans, a ghastly, gruesome cacophony of the dead, so pitiful and so heart-rending. At times the voices rose in amighty chorus, dinning the welkin: "Criminal!"

From their stony pedestals the skulls were writhing, heaving, rolling over, striking at Copernicos Effendi with their hollow, formidable eyes. Drops of perspiration flowed copiously down his forehead, his temples and cheeks; his small beady eyes, immobile in their whites, kept staring; the skulls slowly rose from the bottom of the stones, became life-sized, and parked on the cross bones. All the five bones were moving, dancing around the merchant with mournful howlings, with outlandish and demonic grimacings, their jaws wide open, terrifying him with their dark, hollow eyes.

Startled from his nightmare Copernicos Effendi nervously clutched his throat. He was being stifled. He wanted to flee, be rid of the dead who were threatening him with their skeletons. He took a backward step, panting and staring at the skulls which floated in the air. He wanted to cry out, to howl off his terror, and involuntarily he reached out and clutched the iron lattice-work behind him.

Suddenly he heard a heavy sonorous voice.

"What's the matter, Copernicos Effendi? Are you all right?"

It was the priest who had come to bless the dead.

The merchant was startled. His chest was heaving laboriously and the sweat was pouring down his cheeks.

"How excited you are, Effendi," the priest said with doleful surprise, looking at his rich parishioner who by now was feverishly wiping off his sweat.

Finally, recovering his composure, Copernicos apologized: "Holy Father," he mumbled, "this is the first time that I visited the graves of my loved ones." The vision of the skulls had vanished now by the appearance of the Lord's servant. "Bless these graves, Holy Father," he said seizing the priest's hand as he stood reverentially before the grave of his mother.

The priest took out from the folds of his tunic a prayer book and a cross and started to chant the blessing:

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

The faint sobbings of the mourners could be heard from near and far. In the trees the gentle wind raised an obituary rustle, and at intervals, O sad paradox of human doings, chips of laughter floated from grave to grave, and women and children were scurrying along the pathways as they do in a country fair.

The Priest continued his sonorous, mournful psalmody, touching each grave with his cross:

"In Thine holy temple we offer unto Thee our tearful prayer. Illuminate, O Lord, the spirits of those who sleep, and classify them among the saints on the day of Thy revelation."

Copernicos Effendi, down on his trembling knees, was weeping bitterly. He was weeping silently, for the first time feeling the dampness of the tears on his cheeks,

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the same kind of tears which had flowed like rivers from the faces of his victims. His broad shoulders were quivering from emotion and indeed it was pitiful to see this venerable old man before the graves, choking with sobs and weeping like a little child. "Poor man!" commiserated the passing mourners at sight of the prostration of this "respectable" good old man.

The Priest who could not comprehend his parishioner's sudden outbursts prolonged the ceremony of blessing as long as he could. Finally he put in the epitome: "May their souls rest in peace!" For the last time he extended his cross to Copernicos Effendi's lips who kissed it reverentially.

Having completed his task, the Priest wrapped the cross in the silken cloth, put it inside the fold of his tunic and hurried out of the cemetery after Copernicos Effendi has slipped a gold piece in the palm of his hand. Fearful of being left alone with his dead once again, Copernicos locked the gate and hurried out of the cemetery.

For several days Copernicos Effendi's mysterious silence alarmed the employees of the firm and especially Ghookas Agha. He no longer was fussy about itemized statements of the expenses as he has been only a few days before. Then Ghookas Agha noticed a peculiar thing. Seated before his desk, his spectacles hooked to his nose, pencil in hand, Copernicos Effendi spent long hours writing things on a parchment, scratching it, rewriting and again scratching it. Finally he carefully folded the document and put it in his pocket. Ghookas Agha who had the sense of a hound could not penetrate the content of this mysterious document and sizzled in his curiosity.

"A pest on that cemetery," he would mumble, angrily flattening the hair on his temples.

The third evening Copernicos Effendi said to Ghookas Agha solemnly, "Tonight we'll go home together, Ghookas."

Together they left the office, Ghookas

always a couple of steps behind his master, as was his custom. "I wonder if there's another dead in the house," pondered Ghookas on the way. He had never accompanied his master home unless someone was dead. "And yet, all are dead, there's no one left in the house," he kept thinking, unable to solve the puzzle.

The dinner passed without a word. Then Copernicos took Ghookas to his studio, sat down in front of his desk, hooked on his spectacles and slowly took out the mysterious document from his pocket.

"Ghookas," he said to his agent with a piercing look, "I am a scoundrel. You know that, don't you?"

"God forbid, my Effendi. A virtuous upright man like you, what are you saying, Effendi?" Ghookas was dumbfounded at this outright but truthful confession.

"I know what I'm saying," the merchant continued grimly. "We are going to atone for our crimes." And he unfolded the paper. "Ghookas," he added, "listen to me. You are my accomplice, more or less. You were the one who buried my loved ones one after another. Listen then. Let your conscience speak this once."

And he read the document:

"I leave 500 pounds to the ten churches of Istanbul as candle money. Two hundred pounds for the renovation of the cemetery wall of K. Village. One hundred pounds each to the four churches of Istanbul to celebrate requiem mass for the spirits of the dead twice a year. Four hundred pounds for new tombstones of my loved ones."

Copernicos Effendi looked at his agent with the reflection of a pure and incorruptible soul shining in his eyes.

"Is this enough for the atonement? Ghookas?" he asked, folding the paper.

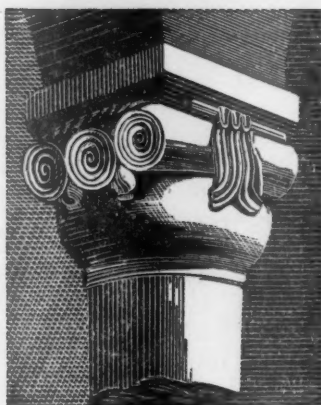
Ghookas was silent for a long moment. Finally he summoned the last vestige of his courage which had been suppressed by his long association with this arch-criminal.

"The atonement, Sir," he said with deliberate composure, "is good as far as it goes. But how are we going to bring back the dead?"

That night, long after Chookas had de-

parted, Copernicos Effendi was seated in front of his desk, deep in thought, pondering Chookas' question to which he could find no answer.

(Adapted by the Translator)



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ECHO OF ARARAT

*Oh, Grief, from whence hope springs,
 Hope which thru a dead land rings,
 Your tears cannot quench the flame,
 Which, tho' now embers, still remembers shame.
 Embers then fanned to reach a fragrant glow,
 A wish whispered — haunted winds then blow
 and carry the dream —
 Of life, again reborn,
 To this land plagued by scorn,
 Life that nurtured the eternal spring
 Then ask, who among us know
 What — to this land tomorrow will bring.*

ANNE ATANOSIAN

HOW WENT THE DAY?

*How went the day?
 The day went well; I saw it as it passed me by,
 On lucid wings its welcome sped,
 And soon it turned to wave goodbye.*

*It Smiled,
 And I watched it as a crippled youth
 Does watch a children's game,
 Then my heart cried there too you must reach,
 But helpless was my mental lame.*

*But tomorrow
 Another smiles I've oft time said before
 Though I pray it leaves me not in sighs,
 The day you ask? The day went well,
 I saw it as it passed me by.*

JOHN VARTOUKIAN

URARTU—THE PRE-ARMENIAN ARMENIA

DR. E. SARKISYANZ

Urartu is the Biblical Kingdom of Ararat, known under that name in contemporary Assyrian records, and centered around Lake Van.

Traditions still living in place names of the Van area attribute many of the Urartean monuments to legendary builders like Semiramis, an Assyrian queen. These traditions appeared in a new historical light with the discoveries and decipherments of Urartean inscriptions showing that the monuments in question belonged to rulers of Urartu, a kingdom largely contemporary with the Assyrian Empire and embracing at its climax practically the whole of Armenia, more than a century before the Indo-European occupation gave the area of Armenia its present name and language.

Urartean inscriptions, written in cuneiforms (inspired by Mesopotamia but composed in a language neither Indoeuropean nor Semitic) were first copied in 1826 and deciphered — mainly by Sayce — since 1882. (They are mainly inscribed on rocks, not on clay tablets like the cuneiform texts of Mesopotamia.) Their language has been frequently compared by philologists with certain living languages of the Caucasus, especially Georgian, and also with Elamite, an extinct language once spoken in western Iran. Urartean is believed to be related to the language of the Hurrians, a people occupying sections of northern and western Mesopotamia, Syria and parts of Palestine during the second millennium B.C., whose existence came to be known only quite re-

cently. It is certain that this pre-Indoeuropean language of Urartu has influenced the Armenian language, though Armenian is Indoeuropean. A number of modern Armenian place-names are believed to go back to the Urartean language and period, for example, Taron.

The Urarteans seem to have occupied the Van area between the time of Tiglath-pileser I and that of Assurnasirpal II — Assyrian rulers who mention the region in connection with their campaigns — which means roughly between 1100 and 880 B.C. However, it is possible that the Urartean state (attested by Assyrian sources since the ninth century) only renewed a political tradition coming from an earlier, a Hurrian period (which is not sufficiently known).

The first Urartean king attested in contemporary sources is Aram, mentioned by Salmanasar III (858-824), his Assyrian opponent. The memory of this first clash with Assyria — which came to be the hereditary enemy of Urartu — is clearly preserved in Armenian tradition as recorded by Moses of Chorene, an Armenian historian living in the fifth century A.D.: He associates a warlike king Aram with a founder of the Assyrian empire, with the legendary name Ninus.

Native Urartean records begin with an inscription of Urartu's king Sardur I, imitating Assyrian inscriptions and written in Assyrian. (Sardur I is tentatively dated 832-820 B.C.) An inscription of his successor Ispuinis (820-800?) is partly com-

posed in the Urartean language. His inscription on the Van rock refers to the building of the Van fortress. He was followed by Menuas (approximately 800-785 B.C.), one of the most successful kings of Urartu; the number of his monuments and the territory they cover indicate a long and prosperous reign, during which the region between Araxes and Ararat became incorporated into the Urartean state. Urartean campaigns in the direction of the previously Hittite Asia Minor are recorded as well as expansion southward of Lake Urmia. Assyrian sources for this period do not mention campaigns against Urartu; there might have been a kind of balance of power.

But a later king of Assyria, Salmanasar IV (783-773), attacked Urartu not less than six times. Yet the mere location of his victory inscription indicates a theatre of military operations suggesting a serious Urartean threat to Nineveh, the Assyrian capital, itself. His Urartean opponents, Argistis I (approximately 785-760 B.C.), records fourteen successful campaigns against Assyria. Under Argistis I Urartu expanded northward, into the fertile regions of north the Araxes plain. His inscriptions were found on the road Kars-Erzerum as well as near Alexandropol. The town of Armavir was founded by this king of Urartu. Under the following Urartean ruler, Sardur III (760-733) Urartu reached its widest extension and became the most dangerous rival of Assyria, its competitor for the domination of the Near East.

Under Sardur III Urartu's power in Asia Minor reached its apex; from there its influence extended into northern Syria and Palestine. Sardur's inscription on the Van rock points even to campaigns on the Ionian coast. At that time Urartu was for a number of years — while Assyria was weakened by civil wars — the dominant power of Western Asia, affecting even developments in Israel. However, after Tiglat-

pileсар III founded in 745 a new Assyrian dynasty, Urartu lost again control over Syria. Yet Urartean influence has been suspected behind subsequent anti-Assyrian movements in Syria (739-736) and even in Media (western Iran) (737). This might have prompted in 736-735 Assyria's direct attack against the Van region, heartland of Urartu. Assyrian forces reached Lake Van, ravaging and destroying on their way. Tiglatpileсар III boasts of destroying Van and massacring its population, ravaging the country far and wide, but the fortress of Van proved impregnable and Sardur escaped.

The following king of Urartu, Rusas I (733-714?) may have founded a new dynasty; he restored Urartean power. He built an irrigation reservoir still partly used in the present ("Rusas Lake" — Keshish Gol) Urartu once again threatened the very existence of Assyrian hegemony by regaining its influence in Syria and northwestern Iran, perhaps in association with Indoeuropean tribes advancing westward on the Iranian Plateau, as well as with Phrygia. Thus Assyria was threatened by encirclement on the part of an extended coalition along her northern borders, a coalition reaching from western Asia Minor into Iran and led by Urartu.

However, in 717-715 Rusas and his allies were defeated by Sargon II of Assyria in a number of decisive battles. This catastrophe for Urartu was largely caused by the migration movements of the Cimmerians, an Indoeuropean people related to Phrygians and Armenians, stretching northward of the Black Sea across southern Russia and pushing against the Urartean borders from the North, precisely at a time when Urartu was engaged in a life and death struggle with Assyria.

The weakening of Urartu by the Cimmerian migration prepared the way for Sargon's invasion of the Van area in 714 B.C. He boasts of having harassed the prosperous

and happy countryside of Urartu and massacred its population. From this blow Urartu never completely recovered. Subsequently, during the seventh century, Urartu rapidly declined. Her relations with Assyria improved precisely because of Urartu's weakness and Cimmerian and Scythian invasions from the north threatening both states.

We have no information about the policy of Urartu at the time of Assyria's agony (612-606). Urartu is not mentioned among the anti-Assyrian league of states which destroyed Niniveh. The friendly relations attested shortly before Assyria's collapse would suggest a benevolent neutrality of Urartu towards her former arch-enemy. This might have brought her into the disastrous conflict with Media, the rising power of western Iran, which absorbed Urartu either in 612 or in 585 B.C. About this very time (the exact date cannot be specified) the Armenians, (according to Herodotus related to the Phrygians) occupied the Van area, supplanting or absorbing the Urartians and laying the foundation for the historical Armenian nation.¹ The Armenian occupation of Urartu was a gradual process lasting perhaps a whole century. The last Urartians are believed to have retired into the Araxes valley before the Armenian advance.

On one hand, it was through the Urartian heritage that the early Armenians as well as other peoples of the Caucasus and even of southern Russia were exposed to

cultural achievements of ancient Mesopotamia, one of the cradles of Western civilization, an observation which could be confirmed by numerous instances from Caucasian and south Russian archaeology. On the other hand, the civilization of Urartu, the pre-Indoeuropean Armenia, contained a number of links with other pre-Indoeuropean cultures of the Mediterranean area.

Thus Urartian pottery has been said to present affinities to Cretan and Mycenaean pottery of the "Minoan" civilization, just as religious use of bronze shields in Urartian temples had their counterpart on Minoan Crete. (According to the German archaeologists Herzfeld and Lehman Haupt an Urartian temple-depicted in an Assyrian palace — "is almost the exact picture of a Greek temple with all the essential details *long before there was anything like that in Greece*". The floral design of an Urartian bronze throne was said to be a prototype of earliest patterns of the Ionic column. Counterparts of an Urartian bronze vase have been pointed out in Etruria (pre-Roman central Italy, in turn culturally connected with Asia Minor). The so-called "zoomorphic junction" — that is a combination of parts of two different animals, like the leg of a cow growing out of the mouth of a devouring beast of prey — established striking affinities between Urartian and Etruscan art objects, the former being the more original. Similarly, the use of dark, often black, lines of stones for their color effects within a wall of white stones, conspicuous in medieval Armenian architecture and going back to Urartu's civilization, has also been attested in early Italian architecture which inherited it from the Etruscans. Urartian water cisterns hewn into living rock in rock fortresses of the Van area likewise have their parallels in Etruscan Italy, just as other features of Urartian rock architecture, such as underground passages with a dead end, which are associated with a cult of

1 The late Professor Adontz put the Armenian occupation of Urartian areas (that subsequently came to be known as the historical Armenia) into the period between 612 and 585 B.C. An earlier study by Lehmann-Haupt associated it, on the contrary, with a later period in the sixth century B.C. An up to date survey of the problem can be found in Grousset's "Histoire de l'Arménie". The history of Armenia from the middle of the seventh to the late sixth century is not directly covered by contemporary sources and is therefore largely obscure. The last contemporary reference to Urartu ("Ararat") seems to be in the Old Testament: Jeremiah, 51, 27.

the goddess of earthquakes (Cybelle in Asia Minor). Such parallels in the architecture of Etruria, the Aegean, Asia Minor and Urartu, have been used as testimony for the original cultural homogeneity of these areas before their occupation by Indoeuropean peoples.

Urartean roads — cut directly through rock instead of leading around a mountain — are still in use. The Urartean tradition of dwellings hewn into living rock is still alive today in rock habitations of Georgia (like the monastery of Wardzie). Similarly, the irrigation constructions built in ancient Urartu are still used for the same purpose for which they had been originally built. They constitute perhaps the most brilliant achievement of Urartean civilization and are one of the marvels of ancient architecture. A famous example is the irrigation canal constructed by king Menuas, cut through rocks, crossing a natural river (by means of a wooden conduit) and still used to irrigate the land around the city of Van. Van's fertility is even now still conditioned by this rock canal of Urartu's king Menuas, 2750 years after its construction and long after the more renowned irrigation system of ancient Mesopotamia has fallen into decay and oblivion.

Likewise reaching back into Urartean times are the traditions of metal work for which the Van area is still celebrated today. Already "the Vannic Empire" (Urartu) had a reputation for highly evolved and early developed iron techniques. There even exists a theory attributing the first (in the entire world) invention of iron techniques to the Van region. In any case, the proximity to mineral resources was favorable to the development of Urartean metallurgy. On the whole, the Urartean workmanship of bronze is superior to that of iron. (The casting of votive bronze seems to have been a sacred ritual, performed by the King or the high priest; bronze objects played an important role in Urar-

tean temples.) Urartu belongs together with Asia Minor to the same iron-working region located around the Taurus mountains. In its meteoric form iron was associated in Hittite Asia Minor (1750-1200 B.C.) with a deity (Teshub) also worshipped in Urartu under the name Teisbas.

The latter formed a part of an Urartean "trinity" headed by Khaldi, the sky god and eponym of the people and state of Urartu (both being called in native inscriptions "Khaldi";² never "Urartu" — this being the Assyrian but widest used term). Urartu appears as a complete theocracy: all royal inscriptions are addressed to Khaldi, the fortresses of the empire are therein called "gates of Khaldi's City". (Since fortresses and sanctuaries of Urartu were largely located on *mountains* this has been interpreted as "gates to the Sky", Khaldi being a sky god.) Apparently the Khaldi cult included human sacrifice. Khaldi was also god of the dead.

Urartu's pantheon was, like other aspects of this civilization, very strongly influenced by Mesopotamia, particularly through the intermediacy of Assyria. Thus Khaldi came to be associated with the Mesopotamian solar deity — Ardinis. A god of the moon, water and earth was called Selardis. Most Urartean gods (one inscription enumerates forty six deities) are known only by name.

Certain elements of Armenian mythology are believed to be derived from the pre-Indoeuropean, that is Urartean, period of Armenia's history. Such are Mesopotamian deities of the pagan Armenian pantheon, for example Ishtar (the goddess of love and fertility) and Ara (presented by Moses of Chorene as beloved, killed and resurrection by the Assyrian Semiramis) who resembles the Babylonian fertility god Tam-

²Already ancient Greek and Roman historians have frequently confused the "Khaldi" (Urartians) of the Van area with the "Chaldeans" of Babylonia.

muz (resurrected by Ishtar). Their cult probably entered Armenia in the Urartean period, being attested among the pre-Christian Armenians. It is believed that accounts of pre-Christian Armenian paganism, as presented by Moses of Chorene in the fifth century A. D., contain echoes of Urartean mythology. The same would apply to the so-called "Vishaps", dragon mon-

asters of Armenian folklore. They are supposed to guard hidden treasures and are associated with fish-shaped, semi-megalthic monuments of Armenia that may well go back into the times of Urartu. However, Armenian mythology and folklore have not been sufficiently recorded to permit among them a search for survivals of Urartean traditions.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. E. Sarkisyanz, whose contribution on these pages represents his first effort for the REVIEW, was born in Iran, attended the University of Teheran and received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He is the author of a number of published articles on historical aspects of Oriental border areas of Russia. A major work from his pen, a comparative study of Oriental and Russian religious ideals, will appear this year. Dr. Sarkisyanz formerly served as an associate professor of history at a Texas college, but is at the moment doing special research in the field of history.



DAVID OF SASSOUN

DR. H. S. VARVARIAN

The legend of David of Sassoun (Sassountsi David) is a thrilling epic, recited and sung — since the last quarter of the seventh century — by old troubadours, grandmas and grandpas for generations on end, inspiring hope, faith, endurance and heroism to the sensitive hearts of every single Armenian youngster. It is a historic legend, dating from the time of the invasion of Armenia by the Califs of Egypt (about 670 A.D.). It is the Epic of David of Sassoun, the Son of the great Lord of Sassoun, called MIHER, who was childless until his very old age, and hence, was exceedingly worried for the fate of his people after his death.

One Christmas night he went as a pilgrim to the TIRAMOR VANK (Monastery of the Mother of our Lord) on top of Mount Marout, to present to St. Mary — Patroness of Sassoun — this great worry of his soul, which was gnawing at his heart day and night. While he was in earnest prayer, kneeling before the altar, an angel was revealed and said:

"Hail! O, Miher, Lord of Sassoun! Your voice attained the throne of God. You will soon be granted a son. But, mind, at his birth you will die, you and your wife."

"Let the will of God be done," was the reply of the old Miher.

After nine months a son was born to Miher, whom he named David, and the same day Miher and his wife died, leaving to his son his magic horse, his armours and his magic sword as heritage, symbols of his invincible power. While Miher was living no aggressor had ever dared to invade Sassoun.

When David was about nine years old, the great Calif of Egypt, having been informed of the death of Miher, marched on Sassoun, demanding from Ohan (brother of Miher) to pass with all his people, young and old, man and woman, under his sword, as a sign of complete submission. All the people of Sassoun obeyed the edict except the nine year old David the son of Miher.

The great Calif, furious at the rebellious David, wanted to kill him. But his courtiers interceded, saying: "O! Thou Lord of Egypt! It is unworthy of a great Calif to put up with a dolt, a scrubby child. For, what could a child do if even his whole body was made of fire?"

"Well", said the Calif, tugging at his beard portentously, "I will not kill David, but now see well, that if any evil hits me in the future, it will come from David, the son of Miher." Thus the great Calif left Sassoun, after laying the country waste, and after destroying the TIRAMOR VANK, the source of Miher's faith.

As years passed David grew to be a giant himself, more so than his giant father. He soon stopped paying the levy laid by the great Calif of Egypt. He began to rebuild the TIRAMOR VANK on top the Mount Marout, where the angel of God was revealed to his father Miher. The great Calif, hearing of the restoration of the TIRAMOR VANK on top the Mount Marout, and the revolt of David against his suzerainty, sent (under SERASKAR — commander-in-chief — Hatim) a punitive expedition against David of Sassoun, with

the express order of capturing David, the son of Miher, the Lord of Sassoun, and taking him to Egypt living or dead, as depicted in the following verses:

A mighty army Hatim did gather,
And rode for SASSOUN, horses in lather.
"David will repent," He said in dire wrath,
"I will capture him ere he takes a breath."

"I will demolish that Vank where he prayed,
The source of his might, and his father's faith,
Mount Marout I will erase very soon,
From the earth's surface, and also Sassoun.

"I swear by ALLAH that living or dead,
I shall to Calif take mad David's head."
Thus entered Hatim in David's domain,
To kill, and to rape, to sack and profane.

News of invasion frightened old Ohan,¹
Went to kiss Hatim's skirt, feet and firman.
"Bring me," said Hatim, "David, girls and gold,
Or else on your head will burst thunder-bolt."

Ohan in hurry fetched him many fold,
Than what he wanted, jewels, girls and gold.
"Fetch me a bushel," said he, "this treasure,
I must, without fail, count it and measure."

With velvet eyed girls of houri sight,
Did Hatim's lusty appetite incite.
Kissed some rosy cheeks, and losing his head,
"Fays you are worthy of the Prophet," he said.

"But where is David? You cursed infidel!
Be sure," said Hatim, "I'll burn you in hell."
"He will come soon, Sire, you Lord of our land,"

Said Ohan boldly, and fool did pretend.

"Go quick and fetch him," he said in fury,
Then turned to embrace his select houri.
Just then came David. "What is this?" He said,
"You dogs of Egypt did you think me dead?"

Grabbing the bushel, he said, "you Potent!
"Beware of David, and make firm your stand."
He flung the bushel, ripping Hatim's top.
Up to now it flies without any stop.

"David," said Ohan, "you did something bad.
It will rouse Egypt, and make Calif mad,
Sure he will come back with his immense might,
And lay waste your land in a single night."

"Don't worry, uncle, I will wring his neck,
Dump him in a sack, send to Egypt back.
I'll open the doors of the dungeon wide,
Will set free the girls, and the world in plight.

"I will use this gold, poor people's sweat,
Will build them schools and churches," he said.
"Egypt's no soldier, uncle, I will harm,
I will let them go to their homes and farm."

With torn head Hatim, and tattered army,
Came back to Egypt in full infamy.
"You faint-hearted dog! You cowardly chieft!
Oh! Shame that you brought!" roared the mad Calif.

"But my gracious Lord!" said Hatim in plight.
"Armenians are not Egyptians, in fight.
Ere fighting David, you must well ponder,

¹ Ohan — David's uncle.

He hits like lightning, and bursts like thunder.

"In war Armenians beat us, no wonder,
For like us, they don't fight for sheer plunder.

They have in their hands the sharp sword
of right,
For their faith, and hearth, for justice they
fight."

"Enough," said the Calif, "go, levy new tax,
Before does crescent into full moon wax,
Raise me an army, like sands of the Sea,
That no eye has seen in sight or fancy."

One July morning in haze Ohan saw,
Mountains of Sassoun all covered with
snow.

"Great God! What is this? Snow! now! in
July!
I wonder," he said, "if my eyes do lie?"

He shaded his eyes, and he saw with awe,
That white on the hills were tents and not
snow.

He began to wail, "Woe upon us all,
The Calif will take a terrible toll."

He went to the VANK, wherein David slept,
"God keep us David," he mumbled and
wept.

"The Calif is here with an army vast,
On our fatherland, horrid lot to cast.

"Let us offer him jewels, pearl and gold,
Our most pretty girls, and wealth thousand
fold.

Let us kiss his feet, his kaftan, his hand,
To be merciful on our fatherland."

"Don't worry uncle, I will wring his neck,
And I'll his carcass send to Egypt back."
Said David, and knelt before the altar,
"Help me, God!" he said, "let me not falter."

He took his father's old visor and shield,

And his magic sword, gilded to its hilt.
On his coat-of-mail, there shone from afar,
A cross made of gold, like the morning star.

"Hark!" he said, "uncle, hark! it is my steed,
He neighs like thunder, doth rumble and
seeth.

The earth does tremble when he hits his
hoof,
And has known no fear, no shame, no re-
proof."

His steed, like a flash, came pawing the
earth,
Clatter of its feet in Egypt was heard.
His sword made of fire, he pulled from its
sheath,
Egypt's Pyramid melted from its heat.

Toros, his cousin, in a far highland,
To distant neighing, an ear he did lend.
Clad in his armour, he came to Sassoun,
And looked, like a mount, in light of the
moon.

He was giant too, but not like David.
He could eat an ox at a single sit.
Had a mighty voice, like the blare of an ox,
Was shrewd, cunning as a tricky fox.

At midnight Toros entered the Calif's camp,
Roaring like a lion, he began to stamp.
"Wake up, you slave-borns! Get ready for
fight,
I will wipe you out, and your camp to-
night."

With his monster lance thousand tents he
tore,
Upon its sharp end, Hatim's head he bore.
"I am nothing yet by cousin David,
Once he hits," he said, "the whole earth will
split."

"Soldiers of Egypt! You have been indeed,
A tool and victim of Calif's low greed.

Lo!" he said, "here comes David's lightning horse,
Go ask for mercy, bloodshed he abhors."

From stone and boulder red sparks did fly,
David's horse hovered, as birds in the sky.
He came in a cloud, with unsheathed sword,
Over Calif's camp eagle-like he soared.

Egyptian soldiers, they all prostrate fell.
They had their tongues tied by David's high spell.

In hurry they chose a hoary old man.
"Go, ask for mercy", they said, "if you can."

"Take pity on us, O, Lord of Sassoun!
Send us to our homes, before wanes the moon.

We", said the old man, "are a scrubby mite.
By Allah! You should, with Calif have fight."

"In peace", said David, "Go on home, old man.

I will fight Calif, and lick him till then.
And I will set free all you folks to day,
Only your greedy potentates will stay."

Dashing to Calif's tent David's fiery steed,
Neighed and tore the soil with his mighty hooves.

"Where is the Calif?" asked he the guardsmen,

"I come to fight him, and tear his Firman."

"Calif is asleep", the guards mumbled, then,
"Until seventh day wake him no one can.
Three days sole have passed, there are still four more.

Walk in, Sire, and see, how harsh he does snore."

"I don't mind his nap, neither his harsh snort,"

Said David curtly, with acid retort.

"Quick! Go, and wake that monster incarnate,

Or, you serfs, by God, I will have you flayed."

"But good Sire, mercy! how can we wake him?"

Look at the chimney, though murk does it seem,

Yet it is not smoke, it's his thick breath,
Ere we could wake him, t'will whirl us to death."

"You slaves go and fetch blazing brand and torch.

Take off his vestments, do brand him and scorch

If not, I will pierce his thorax so deep,
That from here", said David, "right to hell will leap."

Hot skewers were thrust into his bare back,
But Calif scarcely moved his monster's neck.

"O o f! the bite of fleas! Awake they me keep,"

Mumbled the monster, "and don't let me sleep."

Then they went to fetch the bulky ploughshare,

Heated it red-hot, and made his chest bare.
The blazing hot iron they laid on his chest,

"O o f!" grunted Calif, "bees give me no rest."

Opening his eyes, saw a giant Knight,
All in armour bright, and ready to fight.

Lifting his huge head, he puffed with great force,

To whirl to Egypt David and his horse.

When he saw unmoved his undaunted foe, awe.

Doubt and confusion filled him mix't with Gloating at David with wide blood-shot eyes,

He guessed that his foe, his might does despise.

A thousand horse-power he felt him forsake,
His blind confidence in his might did shake.
Hundred attendents came to help him sit,
His face with a false merriment was lit.

"Hail! David, come in, you seem to be tired.
I heard of your feats, and I have admired.
Sit down", said Calif, "let us drink coffee.
If fight you desire, that too, we shall see."

The crafty monster had dug in his tent,
A bottomless pit sole for this intent.
Had covered its top with a mat of reed,
Then a soft carpet, a sure trap, indeed.

When Calif with force could not subdue
one,
Would call him with ruse, to sit there upon.
So David unwarned, sat upon that seat,
Then headlong toppled into pitch dark pit.

"Ha, ha, ha!" guffawed Calif in delight,
"Now, with the darkness you will have to
fight."

And ordered ten hard, thick millstones, to
fit,
On top of the pit, the tomb of David.

Old Ohan that night had a dream too sad,
Heaven in Egypt was with sunshine clad,
While in David's land, all over Sassoun,
Murky clouds hovered, veiling the fair
moon.

"It is a bad sign." Said Ohan, with dread.
All of a sudden he sat up in bed.

"Hey! You wife! Wake up, go and fetch a
light,
Surely, David is in a sordid plight."

"Enough you worried for that mad David,"
Said his grumpy wife, in a nervous fit.
"Who knows where he is enjoying his time?
Wake me at midnight! Is it not a crime?"

Ohan, though perturbed, settled back in
bed,

But he soon woke up with a scaring fret.
The Star of Egypt was fulgent and bright;
While that of Sassoun shone with a dim
light.

"Get up, wife! he said, "he is in a trap."
"Lie down," said his wife, "you all dream
mishap."

"No, wife!" said Ohan, "it's an ill omen."
"You, coward!" said his wife, "are you a
woman?"

The hen-pecked Ohan went once more to
sleep,
Soon in his old eyes a short nap did creep.
He saw Egypt's star shining in the sky,
While Sassoun's did fast into abyss fly.

"Wake, wife! Give my arms," shouted old
Ohan,
Waiting in distress, impatient and wan.
"I was a damned-fool, to take your advice,
David is captured; in dungeon he lies."

To stables Ohan dashed without delay,
And asked his horses, that could fly like
fay.

"Which one of you can take me to David?
And which one shall give the shortest time
bid?"

White one said he can until break of day.
Chestnut said it is only one hours way.
Grey said, "jump on me, cling my neck with
care,
In just five minutes, I will take you there."

"Me, I shall take you," said black horse,
"jump up,
And put your left foot firm in the stirrup;
Before the right foot you lift from the
ground,
You will reach David with the speed of
sound."

The fiery black horse to the yard he led,
His left foot firmly on the stirrup set,

Before lifting his right foot from the ground
He, himself, to Sassoun's mountain top
bound.

He tied round his chest ten buffalo hide,
Not to burst his lungs from his voice's
might.

Braced his arms of steel, and roared out as
loud
As rumbling thunder from a bursting cloud.

"Hey! Ho! Hey David! Where are you now,
where?"

Remember the cross on your right arm,
there.

Pray to Saint Mary, do her name invoke.
Use your magic sword, out to light you
walk."

On wings of the wind the voice of Ohan,
Tingled, went, and fell on David's tympan.
"Oh, Yes!" said David," it is uncle's call.
Holy Cross! Help me blast tyrant's dungeon
wall.

"Oh! Thou, Saint Mary! In you my hope
lies,

In the light of Cross, in Great Sacrifice!
To you I appeal, grant my only wish!
Darkness, injustice, help me demolish."

Kissing the Holy Cross, pulled his magic
sword,

Smote the ten millstones, which thousand
chunks soared,

Towards Calif's land, and up to the sky,
They do, till this day, continue to fly.

Up came live David, with his magic sword,
Said, "Calif, you will be this sword's re-
ward."

Calif dumbfounded, and in black thought
lost,

Said, "David was dead, can this be his
ghost?"

Feigning good-humour, "Sit down," said

Calif.

"Let us drink coffee and eat some fat beef."

"With you?" sneered David, "you cheat
without shame.

To end tyrant's days, will be my sole aim.

"Wear your arms of gold, the source of your
pride,

Take your lance and shield, and come out
to fight,

Saddle your best horse, the steed of your
choice,

Be sure, in your blood the world will re-
joice."

"I will," said Calif, "accept your challenge.
This land, sure, I shall with David's blood
drench.

You will let me have the right of first
stroke,

Then, straight to the field of fight we shall
walk.

"But before jousting go and think sounder,
Egypt's mighty Lord you have to counter.
Calif's one finger is enough to smash,
Mount Marout, Sassoun, to a shapeless
hash.

"All the Christian kings, their church and
temple,

At Calif's presence, they shake and tremble.
Hence with what courage, you son of Miher,

Have come out to field, me, Calif to dare?"

"Go now, infidel, to your Vank to pray,
Because, by Allah, you will be to day,

A prey to my lance, and your Mount Mar-
out,

I will soon reduce to a dusty route."

By Calif's vile words David's pride was
hurt.

The son of Miher from his very birth,
Had heard no insult, no scorn as to day,
He quivered with wrath, and burned for
the fray.

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On top Mount Marout, a majestic sight,
Angels descended in a shaft of light,
Miher amidst them, a cross in his hand,
Gives his son signal for fight triumphant.

"Yours is the first joust, go on," said David,
And went to take stand in midst of the field.

Then the fat Calif, in his armour gold,
Rode out to the field, looking gay and bold.

Calif took his lance, his shield, his head-gear,
And rode as far back as Diarbekir,
From whence he dashed back on his flying steed,
Which darted like arrow, and whirlwind, indeed.

Ten thousand pounds weighed his ponderous lance,
He held it firmly with a force immense.
He came, and jousted, and was lost in cloud,
Earth trembled, the sky its echo did sound.

"The earth is shaken, sign of Allah's wrath,"
They thought in Egypt, and began to dread.

"No", said, an old SHEIKH, "it is an alarm
Of the giants' fight, and clash of their arms."

"One stroke is enough to send," Calif said,
"A thousand Davids to the vale of death.
Soldiers, go Sassoun, go sack and plunder
Bring me girls and gold," roared he like thunder.

"I want a HOURI, as in paradise,
Roses on her cheeks, with soft, melting eyes,
Lips red as cherries, brows like diadem,
Must shine like Venus in my whole HAREM."

"Hoy, Calif!" a voice came like trumpet loud,

From under heaven's dark masses of cloud.
"Hoy! I am alive," shouted David gay,
"You made of your force a puny display."

"Yeah," said the monster, "it was very near,
This time the clatter of hoof when you hear,
You will, in your boots, shake so hard, indeed,
That I will not need my joust to repeat."

This time his white horse far to Bagdad went,
Thence it shot forward, raising clouds of sand.
The clash of his hoofs raised a dust-tempest,
The mountains rumbled as it hurried past.

With that speed Calif hit at David's shield,
The din of the clash the universe filled.
"David is lost for Sassoun's dynasty,"
Guffawed the monster, with gestures nasty.

"I am still alive", roared David, "and sound;
You can joust once more, but choose well your ground."

"Alas" said Calif, "I should drive far back,
"As far as Egypt, and thence you attack."

This third time Calif far to Egypt went,
And prayed to Allah victory to grant.
Took his mighty lance and rushed at David,
The mountains crumbled from shock of the hit.

A dense cloud of dust arose from Sassoun,
Shot high in the sky, and shrouded the sun.
Three days and three nights the dust hung like cloud,
Three days David's fate, people mourned aloud.

The black dust settled after three full days.
David stood unhurt, like a hill in haze,
And said, "Calif, whose is the turn to joust?
You had three full chance, what was more than just."

Terror filled the proud monster in a trice,
He saw the casting of the fatal dice.
He said "it is yours," with an acid scowl,
Bitterness of death pestering his soul.

He dug a pit of unfathomable depth,
The coward Calif in that abyss leapt,
And covered it with forty thick ox hide,
And forty millstones to make it more tight.

David, like whirlwind, dashed out to the field,
His sword flashed lightning, like sun shone his shield,
His gallant charger did fret, dig, and neigh,
It thundered and roared, rushed on to the fray.

Calif's old mother, with her hair afloat,
Knelt before David, and his mercy sought.
"Come Sire, let your horse trample my grey hair,
But my son," she said, "from your sword do spare."

"Mother's heart is, sure, full with love tender,
There can be no love than that love grander.
I lost my adored mother," said David,
"For her sake, Lady, this time I'll not hit."

Sparkled once again David's magic sword,
This time the sister said, "Mercy my Lord,
Make my brother's life gift to me, your slave,
Then pierce her old heart, and send her to grave."

"O! Calif's sister! Knight I have been bred,
Knight I shall remain, until my last breath.
I'll suffer no slave, here all are free-born.
Protect and respect women I have sworn."

When he, for last time, drew his sword with might,

"This time," cried Ohan, "By God! you must smite.

Kiss the Holy Cross, pray God not to fail,
Your failure will world's liberty curtail."

"I swear, dear uncle, by my father's name,
To house of Miher I shall bring no shame.
This time my magic sword no one can hold,
Will smite the tyrant like a thunderbolt."

He smote the forty thick hides and millstones;
From the frightful clash a blinding light shone;
A dark cloud of dust shot up from the earth,
Its savage rumble in Egypt was heard.

It hacked, passed beyond the grim hill of stone,
Ripped in the middle Calif and throne.
"I stand" roared Calif, "sound as Mount Marout,
You better go on, and have other bout."

David was surprised, "Shake yourself," he said,
"I know I hacked your whole body and head."
When Calif gave shake to his giant form,
It crumbled, and fell with a crash enorm.

Egyptian soldiers saw Calif with dread,
Crash down to the earth, and blow his last breath.
Frightened, like rabbits, they began to shake,
"Mercy, Sire," they begged, "for your father's sake."

"Soldiers," said David, "have no fear of me,
But learn a lesson from that which you see.
Now, listen my words, sons of the people,
Why have you come here? With death to grapple?"

"You did not come here to defend your right,

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*Neither to defend a wronged land by fight.
You came here to sate your base lust and
greed,
And on other men's sweat and toil to feed.*

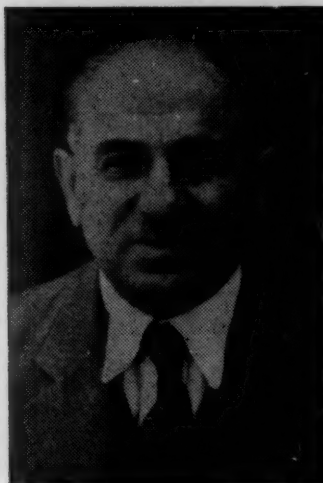
*In righteous labour do your days spend.
But mind, if once more you come back this
way,
By God! I'll feed you to the birds of prey."*

*"Now, you go in peace, to your father's
land,*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. H. S. Varvarian was born in Yozgat, Asia Minor, December 24, 1884, received his primary education at local Armenian schools, his secondary schooling at Anatolia College, Merzifoun, Asia Minor, and graduated from the Medical School of American University of Beirut in 1909. From 1909-1910 he served there as Assistant Professor of Anatomy and Dissection. During the first World War, Dr. Varvarian was mobilised by the Turkish Army as a Doctor. In 1915, he crossed the frontier and took part in the work of reassembling the Armenian Volunteer forces. Presently retired, he resides in Johannesburg, South Africa. His "David of Sassoun" represents his first contribution to THE ARMENIAN REVIEW.



DR. H. S. VARVARIAN

THE DETERMINED PASSENGER

KHOSROV NERSESIAN

"No, my friend, you can't keep on this trip. The fix you are in, it's impossible."

"How do you know how strong I am? Are you a doctor? I am determined to keep on."

"I will drop you at the first station and turn you over to the Red Cross. You probably are unaware of the risks on the road. Travel is no longer a pleasure when enemy planes swoop down, machine gun the passengers and drop bombs on the train. Do you know what happened on this line a few weeks ago as a result of aerial bombardment? Twenty killed and fifty-two wounded. In reporting the affair the papers glossed it over as trivial losses. You see I am not a doctor."

In those hectic war days, crowded in the train which any moment might be subjected to the bombing of enemy planes, we huddled in the aisle almost motionless. An old woman, her head leaning against the shoulder of a soldier, was taking a nap, the soldier had his back to a girl who, deep asleep, lazily stretched her legs on another passenger's half-finished breakfast. I was curious to see the invalid passenger who wanted to continue his journey despite the apparent dangers, although in the conductor's opinion he was too weak to keep on.

Suddenly our train came to a stop with a terrific jolt.

"Quick! All passengers out. Scatter in the fields as far as possible."

It was the same officer who a few minutes before had spoken about the killed and the wounded. There was a dauntless air about him, although fully conscious of the gravity of the situation, which inspired the terrified passengers with confidence. With disciplined agility, one by one, they all filed out of the train leaving behind their belongings and marching towards free nature where an obscure brush could serve as a shelter, could save a life. They scattered in all directions, some of them running to a safe hiding place which they had espied and which they did not want to share with others. Some of them hid behind stacks of mown grass which they thought could not be seen from the skies. A little way off the thick branches of trees cast a heavy shadow in the bright day, a tempting shelter for a man who himself was another shadow of persecution.

"Farther, farther!" a voice cried, "you still have a few minutes. Don't be afraid, separate, scatter."

It was the same officer who, having lent his shoulder to an elderly man, was advancing pantingly, almost catching up with us. It seemed they were the ones who brought the danger. The danger, which could not be seen, was the voice of the officer who had driven the passengers to their flight. He personified both the terror and the safety. It was the same man who knew the truth better than the government reports and the information of the news-

papers. He had seen "trivial losses," twenty dead and as many wounded, and now he was following us. Plain and serene, he was the truth itself, the eye witness of the reality of the crime. A serene conscience yet wounded, looking over the old passenger who leaned against his shoulder with painful solicitude. At that moment their path was interrupted by the fright of a terrible danger. This path was not of his choosing, and I felt the pain which twitched his face by this forced deviation. A silent conformity crossed his face like a shadow.

We heard the distant humming in the sky to which we were accustomed. From high above the danger was coming closer, headed toward us.

"Lie flat on the ground, try to hide yourselves," the officer repeated his warning, carrying the invalid passenger on his shoulder.

We all fell to the ground. The roar of the planes was fast closing in on us. The entire nature spellbound, we could hear only the humming of the planes' engines, everything waiting on their movements. Will they swoop down on us, or are they headed elsewhere? No doubt they could see us from above. There was the long black train resting on the shining rails. Even the windows of the wagons shone brightly, and although the engine fires had been extinguished long since, a thin ribbon of smoke curled upwards lazily. It was an open invitation to the enemy and death, and men like us hovering above, who were strangers and yet our enemies, could easily stage an assault upon us, could swoop down and rain hell fire upon us. All human ingenuity, disposition or power was petrified at the sight of this danger. The poison of utter impotence had paralyzed our living organs and drained our last ounce of energy. A man who is so helpless against a man who is so powerful!

"I don't think they will swoop down

here, I am familiar with the direction of their humming."

The first monitor of life was again the same man who had issued the initial warning. The conductor's gaze was fixed on the sky, at the squadron which seemed poised directly over our heads. At this moment we were interested most in the sound of the humming to ascertain its direction. Straining our hearing, we were trying to confirm that the humming was receding from us. And sure enough, they were receding. Perhaps they had interrupted our journey reluctantly, the journey of the passenger with the strong will who was determined to reach his destination at all cost, regardless of the risks involved.

To us, the whole of nature, the whole of the world consisted of the planes' roaring, the sound of black death which was crossing the blue skies, and which, so monotonous and grim, was spanning the space, snatching from the sun's rays the terror of death, racing faster than the sun and freezing the atmosphere.

"Careful, they may return!"

This time the sound suddenly came closer. We were rooted to the ground and a crawling insect touching our lips perhaps heard the strange murmur of life and hope. We were lost, before God's light closing our eyes like despairing blind men, before the earth and the darkness. Our foreheads pressed against the damp ground, we felt the caressing of a gentle wave reaching our senseless brains, and a few obscure grass blades, like the arms of a child, were trying to cover our heads, swaying in the wind. Everything seemed so alive and yet so close to death. And yet, under a palmful of earth, we seemed to feel the stirrings of God's creative Hope.

Something fell on the ground with a resounding crash, spattering the earth on our faces, clusters of torn grass showered on our heads, and the insects scurried away from us. Pieces of stone rolled helter skelter

all round and a mighty wind hurled upwards huge chunks of iron. The tree which sheltered us was stripped clean of its branches leaving the bare trunk as if a master woodcutter had felled it with one blow. A little way off a patch of ground was going up in flames, belching a cloud of thick black smoke.

The conductor rose to his feet and announced, "It's a plane crash. Obviously it had engine trouble. The rest have disappeared."

The passengers rose to their feet and gazed at the burning pile, one of those machines which had brought the terror of death. They could not come close to it because the fire was too intense. And, to tell the truth, none of the passengers really wanted to approach the burning death. No doubt there was a man, or several men, in the burning plane who only a few minutes before were soaring over us. There, in the sky, they were getting ready to stage a

hell upon us. And now they were on earth, burning in the same hell. The expression on the faces of the passengers was a mixture of horror and partial satisfaction. Some spoke about the plane's model, which, in their opinion, could not compare with the product of their own countries. Others pitied the loss of the gasoline which was going to waste. It seemed none of them was interested in the man, the man who was being burnt there. They were wholly wrapped up in their miraculous escape.

The conductor now ordered the passengers to return to the train. He seemed proud now, and content that the journey would be continued. He was still supporting on his shoulder the old invalid, who, strangely enough, was trying hard to appear more vigorous.

As we were filing into the train, the old man repeated to the officer, "I will reach my destination. Don't try to turn me over to the Red Cross. I will reach my destination all by myself."



AMERICAN LULLABY

*I was a babe — and this lullaby the Lady sang:
 "Send me your homeless. . ."
 The Lullaby was soft — and sweet — and sad,
 And I was safe — Once More —
 This time, at the Breast of Mother America!*

*I remember — Bloodstains — on the Snow — at Valley Forge
 I remember — the Men in the Blue and the Grey, at Gettysburg
 I remember — the Agony at the Argonne Forest
 I remember — Pearl Harbor — the Battle of the Bulge — and the
 Irony of Iwo Jima
 I remember — Heartbreak Hill —
 For I am your Dead — Your Living — Your Unborn!*

*Release and Rebuild with me;
 Every Prison into a Palace —
 Every Hospital into a Happy Home —
 Every School into a Shrine —
 And over — Above — and Beyond all these —
 Build your Memorials in Men and Women —
 With Love — and Light — and Laughter —
 And let each one be — a Tower of Beauty
 In the Morning of the World —
 For, I am FAITH — the FORCE that LIFTS —
 That UNIFIES — the UNIVERSE —*

*And so —
 Each one of you could be —
 A Leonidas at Thermopylae.*

HARRY KOMOORIAN

PHYSIOGRAPHIC ARMENIA

LEVON LISITZIAN

I. Geographic Location

To secure a comprehensive knowledge of the physical aspects of the Armenian homeland, it is necessary to ascertain its location on the Eastern hemisphere, its relative position, and the natural forces that have been instrumental in its topographic formation.

A range of high plateaus, known as the Central Asiatic System, extends throughout the length of the Asiatic mainland, from the Chinese Sea to the Ionian Sea, along the parallel of 40 degree. This range slopes into the steppes of Siberia on the north, and into the plains of China, India, Iran, Mesopotamia, Arabia, and Asia Minor on the south. It can be reached from the southern and northern lowlands only by way of a sustaining chain of mountains, known as bordering ranges, some of them seventy miles wide, like the Himalayas, altogether isolated from the main highland.

This Central Asiatic plateau has played a significant role in the history of mankind, serving as a highway of migration for many peoples and civilizations. Heeren has truly termed it "the historical zone of the earth."

Karl Ritter divides it into two distinct sections: the eastern, high and severe, (the Tibetan Tableland, the Tarim Valley, Gobi, and Shamo), and the western, lower and temperate (Iran, Armenia, and Asia Minor). These two sections are demarcated at a point where the northern and southern bordering ranges meet in a network of mountains known, since the days of Alexander

the Great, as Hindu Kush, the Indian Caucasus. It intercepts the direct line of communication between east and west. From its narrowest point at the Hindu Kush range, the plateau gradually broadens into the tablelands of Afghanistan and Iran, and narrows at its northwestern end. Here the bordering ranges of Armenia diverge, although not far apart, and face each other at 39 and 41 meridian by compressing the intermediate mountains into a massive network. In Asia Minor the plateau finally broadens. The Pontic belt at the north and the Taurus range at the south converge into the western Anatolian mountains that drop abruptly into the Aegean Sea brimming it with their fractures, the Grecian Islands.

The highland of Armenia, as is seen, falls within the midwestern section of the great Central Asiatic tableland. It forms the middle link of western Asiatic ranges at a point where the Iranian mountains extending from southeast to northwest, meet the Antitaurus range running from northeast to southwest in Asia Minor. Armenia constitutes the point of interception. It is significant to note that volcanic activity has here reached its highest point.

II. Physical Characteristics

In its broad physical aspects Armenia forms an integral part of Asia Minor and Iran, yet in its peculiar characteristics, it constitutes an individual geographic entity.

Lynch and F. Oswald enumerate some of these characteristic features, the first of

which is represented by its singularly high, massive elevation which gives the plateau the appearance of a roof over the neighboring lands. While the average altitude of Iran runs from 2000 to 5000 feet, and that of Asia Minor approximately 3000 feet, the altitude of the Armenian plateau ranges from 4000 to 7000 feet above sea level. That is why K. Ritter has called Armenia "a mountain isle." The Armenian highland gives rise to the five great rivers of western Asia: Euphrates and Tigris, running into the Persian Gulf; Kur and Arax, taking their courses to the Caspian Sea; and Jorokh, emptying its waters into the Black Sea.

The second characteristic of the Armenian plateau is its volcanic activity, a feature not uncommon in neighboring lands, although in no other country has this physical aspect attained such magnitude and affected its topography and landscape so decidedly as in Armenia. The country is entirely flooded with lava that has smoothed out many an undulation and rounded the rugged surface of its terrain. Rivers flow through its layers that reach a depth of many hundred feet. Extinct volcanic giants, such as Massis (Ararat), Arakadz, and Sipan, are to be found only in Armenia.

The third characteristic of Armenia lies in the abundance of rivers and subterranean waters, a feature that cannot be claimed to any extent by Iran and Asia Minor. Armenia, on the other hand, cannot claim the extensive salty desert flatlands of Iran nor the Licaonian lowlands of Asia Minor. Particular importance should be given to the great lakes of Armenia: Lake Van, Lake Urmia and Lake Sevan. Lake Van is six times and Lake Urmia ten times as large as Lake Geneva in Switzerland. These lakes temper considerably the climatic severity of their immediate vicinity, and, to a certain extent, compensate for the plateau's inaccessibility to the sea.

At the juncture of the Iranian northwest-

erly and the Antitaurian northeasterly ranges Armenia has developed another, the fourth, most significant characteristic, its mountain chains, rocky folds, and topographic relief so different from those of Iran and Asia Minor. The Armenian plateau should not be taken as an expanse of virgin high flatlands. The frequent earthquakes there disprove such an assumption. According to F. Oswald, the only horizontal or slightly deflected (inclined) strata are those of the pliocenic (Tertiary) and pleistocenic periods. The segregated sectional formation of its topography constitutes another phase of the diversity of the terrestrial relief of the land.

In view of these physical characteristics, F. Oswald in his extensive study of the geology of the Armenian plateau states that "it possesses an individual character more pronounced than that of the two neighboring countries," (Iran and Asia Minor). ¹

III. Natural Boundaries

From north and south the boundaries of Armenia are plainly and distinctly demarcated by bordering mountain ranges.

The uniform chain of Taurus mountains formed the natural southern boundary that sets off the Armenian highland from the (Mesopotamian) valley of the Persian Gulf. This ancient Taurus range extends to the headwaters of the Great Zav river and over Arifta mountain reaches Chelou mountain a little north of Julamerk, where the natural setting assumes the characteristic aspects of the Armenian tableland. The district of Bashkala geographically falls within the Armenian zone, as indicated by Wilhelm Bachman in his descriptive study. ² Here the Taurus, with its pointed, dented snow-capped mountains, diverts its northeast-

¹ Fr. Felix Oswald, "About the History of the Tectonic Development of the Armenian Highlands," Tiflis, 1916, p. 1; (in Russian).

² Ber, Z. Routenkarte von Mossul nach Wen-Peterm. Mittell, 1914, Januar, H. S. 21.

ward course to the very shores of Lake Van, where with an abrupt, perpendicular fall, it creates a setting akin to the Norwegian fjords.

At the point where the Aradzany (Mourad river) approaches its slopes, the Taurus chain maintains a southeasterly to north-westerly direction, curves into an archway, encircles Dzovk,³ the mountain lake, and drops into the waters of the Euphrates river. This southern boundary range has an aggregate stretch of 310 miles.

The northern sharp declivities of the Taurus range, overlooking the Armenian plateau, are barren, almost void of vegetation, except the southern shores of Lake Van where the mountain slopes, here and there, are covered with forests.

On the southern slopes of the range, overlooking the Mesopotamian plains, an entirely different setting captures the eye, particularly at the sources of mountain brooks. Here the banks of foaming, rushing rivulets are covered with poplars, willows, and occasionally with walnut and platane trees. Forests on the slopes abound with pigmy oaks. This entire district presents a characteristically alpine setting. The clear brightness of the volcanic, barren plateau of Armenia is mellowed by the gloomy gorges and verdant crevices of this zone.

The following figures should indicate the perceptible difference between the elevation of the high plateau and the lower plains: Diarbekir is located at an altitude of 1900 feet; Lake Van 5637 feet; Moush 4640 feet, and the mountain passes are 7500 feet above sea level.

The alpine character becomes more pronounced at the juncture of the Armenian Taurus range with the Zagros mountains south of Van, within the district of the Bohtan river, the Great Zav, and their tributaries. Explorers unanimously claim this

district, named Hakkiary, as the homeland of the Kurds.

In the vicinity of Dzovk, the Taurus range narrows down into a lower level and almost ceases to be a natural barrier. At this point, it is possible to cross the range from Diarbekir to Kharberd any season during the year at an altitude of 5000 feet. The eastern route, from Sugher to Bitlis along the banks of Bitlis river, and through the passes of Tadvan (5894 feet) and Bory (7480 feet), would hardly present any difficulty during warm weather, whereas, the other route, extending from Mousoul, along the banks of Great Zav, to Amatea, Lizan, Julamerk, Bashkala, or towards Van along the banks of Khoshab river (Hayotz Tzor), is passable only during the summer months from June to September. This is the route presenting great, almost insurmountable difficulties on account of natural barriers and the evermenacing Kurdish peril.

The northern boundary of the Armenian tableland presents a somewhat complex picture. It should be noted at the start, that the district of upper Jorokh river and its tributaries offer a great contrast in altitude, — a lowland that at its eastern extremity ascends into a chain of meridian volcanic mountains. On the basis of these characteristics, the Jorokh Section, Imerhevy, and Ajaristan with their segregated, broken chains of mountains, deep valleys and gorges, are similar to the southern slopes of the Taurus range and cannot be considered an integral part of the Armenian plateau. For this reason the natural northern boundary of Armenia, starting approximately with the Kiumbet and Kiavour mountains of the wide Pontic range, cannot be drawn continuously along the left bank of Jorokh to the Barkharian and Maghara mountains. At this point, Lynch carries the natural boundary of Armenia over Sper and the northern mountain belts of Erzroum and Basen to Dufila and Garkabazar as far as Soghanlou mountains. It should be

³ In the province of Kharberd, ancient Dzovk (Sophena). (Translator's note.)

stated, however, that Lynch, as he admits himself, has not clearly outlined on his map the districts of Tortam, Lewaneh, and Der-sim. The natural boundary line, nevertheless, should be continued from Soghanlou, along the plateau always toward north, over the volcanic chain of Arzian-Sagoulaperd, as far as the Imerit mountains.

The coastal ranges of the Pontic Alps are constantly effected by atmospheric humidity. The subtropical climate and the bordering sea have produced a robust and abundant vegetation. No sooner than one crosses the Pontic range and penetrates the interior, he will witness an ascending landscape, along the banks of Jorokh, utterly arid and void of forest vegetation. The higher the climb toward the plateau, the scantier and poorer its vegetation. Mighty forests are to be found only among the valleys extending east to west. Among the higher regions people have to resort to irrigation and at times face starvation, particularly in drought years.

The Imeritian range, extending directly from east to west, consists of the Codimeria, Khalkhamo, Mepisdzgharo, Gakera, and Saghaladlo mountains ending at Borjom Pass, through which the river Kur coming down the Armenian highlands enters the Georgian lowlands. At this point the Moskigian range joins the Caucasus to the northernmost range of Armenia and divides Georgia into the western (Pontic) and eastern (mainland) sections:

The following figures indicate clearly the difference in altitude between the Rion valley, Golkis, and the Armenian highlands: Koutayis 870 feet; Akhaltzka 3316 feet; Akhalkalak plateau 5500 to 7000 feet, with its mountain pass, Zagar 7104 feet above sea level.

The Imeritian range is not wide and as a natural barrier presents no great significance. Its northern slopes, covered with beautiful forests, abound with the vegetation of the Pontic belt. On its lower and

middle slopes are found lichen, mountain laurel, and birch trees; on the upper, evergreens, and on the highest slopes, alpine pastures and barren rocks.

Among the border passes Borjom assumes importance as a means of communication between Armenia and Georgia. The vegetation of the bordering belt as well as the ethnographic element of Georgia have made their way into Armenia through this defile.

Through the Borjom pass the Imerit mountains emerge into the Trialet chain that, as far as the Tiflis meridian, maintains the same direction east to west. This belt is followed by the Somkhet (Ibero-Armenian) mountains running along the main Caucasian range from northwest to southeast.

The second meridian volcanic chain of this district, Garakhatch and its belt, takes great oreographic significance, encompassing the volcanic lakelands of the Chalther region. Like its western counterpart, this chain hems in the descending lowlands of Dzalgara, along the upper banks of Khram, and the plains of Lory.

The northeastern boundary is set by Shah mountain, skirting Lake Sevan just as the Taurus range skirts Lake Van. Kinel mountain sets the boundary belt of northern Karabagh, extending to southeast as far as the river Arax and following its course to the Caspian Sea.

Forest vegetation along the northern slopes of this range becomes more sparse to the east, further from Moskigian mountains. It ceases to exist at an altitude of 6500 - 7000 feet except at the main passes of Debet, Aghstav on the Armenian plateau, and the narrow gorges of the river Tartar where groves make an upward dash.

The eastern boundary line, dividing the Armenian and Iranian plateaus, is not demarcated by a distinct bordering range. The Arax valley on this side is exposed, just as the district of Lake Urmia constitutes an

integral part of Armenia while remaining undetached from Iran and serving as a frontier or corridor. The mountains separating the waters of Arax and Urmia can be taken as the eastern boundary line.

It may be preferable to define a western frontier zone, rather than natural boundary line for the Armenian plateau. Within the 38-40 meridian the Pontic and Tauric ranges converge into a concentric mass of mountains that is known as the district of Der-sim, the frontier zone between Armenia and Asia Minor. A little farther west are the high Tauric and, particularly, the Antitauric ranges along the course of the river Halis (Kezel Urmak).

This western frontier is of high cultural and historic significance. Edmund Naumann calls it "the eastern rampart of Anatolia," the boundary line of the ancient Lydian and Median kingdoms. Strabo often refers to this "kersones" — peninsula — beyond Halis and Taurus. The entire section, extending east to this "Anatolian rampart," is closely related to the land of Armenia.

IV. Inner Sectional Demarcations

Consider next the inner demarcations of Armenia and the integrated sections that constitute its geographic entity.

The most conspicuous inner line of demarcation is drawn by the high mountain chain that, starting with the Great and Lesser Ararats in the east, extends directly west as far as the Lake Baluk Keol and, bending its way into an arch towards the north, reaches Keoseh mountain (11,262 feet). The extension of this Armenian belt or Ararat chain can be marked further in a southwestern direction to a point where it loses its character as a vertical rampart. This range attains considerable height, with its mountain passages as wide as 8000 to 9000 feet. It is approximately 100 miles long and serves as a wall between the southern and northern provinces. As Lynch and Oswald have stated, this Armenian belt forms the "spine of Armenia."

Although a protecting wall, dividing Armenia into two sections and strongly affecting the course of its social development, the chain by no means disrupts its geographic entity. Similar characteristics and natural settings prevail on both sides of the belt. From a social-historic standpoint, this divisional aspect of the Ararat belt is almost nullified by a number of wide-open passages connecting north with south and south with north and particularly by the high plateaus extending along the northern and southern slopes of the chain.

The Godour chain, comparatively less important, approaches the Ararat belt from the south as an extension of the Zagros mountains of the Taurus range. Passing to north, from south over the Mour and Godour mountains, it diverges into two directions at Tondirig: one arm extends to Baluk Keol and the other one to Great and Lesser Ararats near Bayazit. Within this fork lies the valley of Bayazit, the ancient Gokovit.

This chain, separating Turkey from Iran, is easily passable at many points. Among the passes are Khanasor or Dilman, 8100 feet; Godour, 8000 feet; Khoy-Bayazit, 7000 feet. The Armenian belt differs from the Godour chain in that the former is the source and headwater of river systems, where as the latter is devoid of active waterways.

The northern and southern bordering ranges joining the western volcanic chain and the Ararat and Godour belts form almost an uninterrupted twisting line resembling the Latin character S or the Armenian S- (*tune*). Its upper bend embraces the northeastern part of Armenia and its lower curve rounds the southwestern section. Both sections are equal in area. The upper bend leans eastward three degrees over the lower end, while the lower curve leans four degrees over the upper end.

Both of these sections have their corresponding river systems. Arax with its

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tributaries runs through the north, while eastern and western Euphrates runs through the south. The northeastern section leans east; the river Arax flows eastward while the southwestern section leans toward west and Asia Minor; the river Euphrates flows westward and southwestward. Arax faces east, Euphrates faces west. In the outward section of the upper curve of this S will be found Garin (Erzrum), the highest province of Armenia and at the upper and lower extremities two isolated regions, Garabagh (Siunik) at the northeast, physiographically a miniature of Armenia with a central plateau surrounded by high mountains; Dersim with its lofty, inaccessible, and forest-clad mountains in the southwest.

Besides these two main sections, Armenia is segregated into individual terrace-lands varying in their general formation, areas, and altitudes. These terraces could be likened to the steps of a staircase. In Armenian they are identified as *դաշտեր* (plains).

These plains are hemmed in by massive mountain units such as (Nemrot) and Arakadz, that serve as supporting bases for the higher plains above. Thus, the chain extending from Kinel mountain to Ordubat supports the plain of Garabagh, approximately 3000 feet higher than the Araratian plain. The chain of Palandeken sustains the plains of Derman and Shoushara, higher than Garin and Bassen. Many of these mountains, considerably above sea level, lose their lofty aspect and look like hills because of their setting in high altitudes and widespread lava beds. In view of this, they present little significance as natural barriers, although, with their wide bases resembling steppes and adjoining high volcanic plateaus, they play a role not less important in the capacity of high horizontal frontiers.

Following the downward course of the Aradzany (Mourad river), a tributary of

Euphrates, we note a gradual decline in altitude on the entire plateau. The upper basin of the Alashkert plain (Karakiliseh, 5360 feet) is followed by Doutakh (5240 feet), Boulanukh (Gop, 5160 feet), the Moush plain (city of Moush, 4640 feet), and the Balou plain (3215 feet). Or following the course of western Euphrates are the plain of Garin (city of Garin, 6188 feet), Derjan (city of Mamakhatoun, 4800 feet), and the plain of Erzingan (city of Erzingan, 3900 feet).

V. The Climatic Characteristics

The temperate zone of Armenia and its high elevation from sea level have proven the deciding factors in her climate. The surrounding belt of high mountains deter humidity from the sea. The damp wind currents from the Black, Caspian, and Mediterranean seas, while tempering the climate, deposit a considerable portion of their moisture on the surrounding high ranges. While Imeritia, Mindrelia, and Lazistan along the Black sea and Talish near the Caspian sea get an annual rainfall of $39\frac{1}{3}$ - $78\frac{2}{3}$ inches, the central plateau hardly gets $19\frac{2}{3}$ inches, and the Araratian plain gets the least, approximately 9.84 cubic inches.

The Black Sea gales penetrate the Garin plains during winter and cover the high mountains with a heavy blanket of snow while during the summer only the northern and eastern dry winds blow.

Because of the low atmospheric humidity of the Armenian plateau, continuous irrigation has proven the indispensable factor in the cultivation of soil since the advent of economic development. The countryside is covered with a network of irrigation ditches. To this day, people in the vicinity of Van are making full use of an irrigation system, the Shamiram Canal, that was built by the Urartian king, Menuas, towards the end of the ninth and the beginning of the eighth century B.C.; the canal joining the Zankou river (Hrazdan) to

Lake Sevan, and the traces of a network of ditches on the slopes of Arakadz and the Araratian plain are worthy of note.

The severity of the Armenian climate can be attributed to the absence of the tempering effects of the sea. The extremities in temperature are great. The winter cold in Garin registers -25° and the summer heat $+44^{\circ}$; winter in Erivan -25.5° and summer $+36.7^{\circ}$ while in Kutayis the summer heat climbs to $+37.3^{\circ}$ and the winter cold drops to -12.9° with an annual difference of 52.2° against 72° in Kars.

Garin has practically no spring season. The snow of seven months melts within a few days, creating pools and rivulets. Nature awakens all of a sudden. Wheat attains its full growth within two months, May and June.

VI. Soil Productivity and Culture

The lowest and widest terrace-lands of Armenia are its flat lands created through the abrupt drop of a section of the earth's surface and the rise of another above. These terraces bear heavy strata of river, lake, and sea beds mixed with volcanic lava and ash; they are characteristically fertile. Being situated at an altitude of 4000 - 6000 feet, these terrace fields have proven a good ground for wheat of many varieties.

In comparative altitude the Araratian plain is the lowest with an elevation of 3000 feet above sea level. Being the largest plain in area, it has played a leading role in Armenian history as the center of national life and culture. The same role can be attributed also to the plain of Moush, the ancient Daron, the cradle of Armenian history.

The table-land of Garin is highest in elevation, approximately 6000 feet. Adjacent to this high plain lie the lake basins, -- the basin of Lake Van with the plains of Van, Garjgan, Gavash, Timar, Bergry, Arjesh, and Adelchivaz; the basin of Lake Urmia with the plains of Dilman, Salmasd, and Urmia; also the narrow valleys of Khos-

hab (Hayotz Tzor), Bin Keou Sou (Vardo), Koonag, Keghy rivers, and the Moushour at Dersim; and the valleys of Upper Jorokh, Zank, Garny, Vedy, Daralakiaz, and Arpachay (Vayotz Tzor) rivers.

All these table-lands, lake basins, and river valleys, owing to climatic conditions and the nature of their soil, have proven fertile agricultural lands. Besides wheat of the higher grade, barley, rye, and millet also thrive; among the lower well-irrigated lands are rice, cotton, and tobacco. The Araratian and Moush plains, Van, and Kharberd, are famous for their vineyards and orchards which bear fruits of the most delicious variety. History records the abundance in cereals, fruits, wine and beer that Xenophon witnessed in the Armenian valleys of Daron. It is not without reason that many botanists have traced the origin of certain species of grapes, pears, and apricots to Armenia.

To the agricultural regions are added the volcanic plateaus and mountain slopes of the districts where wheat, barley, or black wheat still thrive. The altitude of 6000 feet has proven the highest limit for the growth of wheat, and 7000 for black wheat and barley. The plateaus of Kars, Keoleh, Ardahan, Akhalkalak, Degman, Shoushara, and the slopes of Arakadz, Ahmancan, the southern Karabagh chain, Ala Dag, and Bilechan fall within this zone, although they remain uncultivated on account of the insufficiency in atmospheric humidity and the presence of volcanic gravel in the soil. Agriculture within these areas has proven very difficult, notwithstanding the arduous efforts of the people to overcome these natural hindrances. With the cultivation of the soil in the course of time, sedentary life and cultural development have been realized within these regions.

Adjoining these regions there are, nevertheless, extensive areas offering no possibility for sedentary culture. Within this zone

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lie the high mountain slopes and lands above the cereal belt such as the Binkeol, Chimaldereh, and Garayazy slopes, the Kermit chain and, at the north, the mountains of Alachay, Garakhatch, Aghbara, Kesir, Chalther, and the head water ranges between Arax and Saryan, upper Aradzany and Bayazit. These districts, ranging from five to twelve thousand feet in altitude possess a sub-alpine character. During the summer months, covered with green grass, they serve as beautiful and rewarding pastures. Man, even within this non-arable zone, bends every effort to reclaim as much tillable land as possible. Within the highest regions of Aparan one may see a villager tilling his small patch of soil and waiting for harvest in late September, a harvest that at times never materializes because of the withering cold of an early autumn. In the course of time, it may prove feasible to reclaim these pasture lands through irrigation and clearing of gravel, yet never will it be possible to bring them to the point of fertility so characteristic to the lower plains and valleys. The zone of agricultural productivity remains constant and unalterable.

In physical characteristics, Armenia presents a non-uniform, dual entity — the agricultural, sedentary cultural zone and the region of alpine pastures within the approaches of mountain summits. Between these zones lies the middle belt within the elevation of 7000 feet. The dual character of the economic status of the land corresponds to this horizontal mark of demarcation — agriculture in its broadest sense at one side and animal husbandry on the other. Since the early days of history the inhabitants of Armenia, being mainly preoccupied with the cultivation of soil, have been taking their sheep and cattle to the pasture lands in summer months. This dual aspect of economic life still prevails on the plateaus, particularly within the Armenian provinces under Turkish rule, where the

native Armenian element has been pursuing the sedentary occupations of life and the nomadic Kurd the husbandry of cattle and sheep.

VII. Unique Characteristics

The various facts stated heretofore indicate the wide dissimilarity in the physiography of Armenia and other alpine countries. Switzerland and Tyrol fail to reach the elevation of Armenian highlands. Lake Geneva is set in an altitude of 1250 feet above sea level. Vinevaldstaedt is 1455 feet, Garda only 217 feet, the city of Salzburg 1372 feet above sea level, while Lake Sevan is situated at an altitude of 6340 feet above sea level, Lake Van 5637 feet, Lake Urmia 4100 feet — nearly four to five times higher than those in Switzerland.

The elevation of Armenian mountains is not abrupt or sudden as it is among the Alps. That is why the Armenian landscape does not present the diversity in vegetation and verdant hues so profusely displayed in Switzerland and Georgia (Caucasus) where within a comparatively small area can be found the flora of the altitude of every zone from tropical to alpine.

The Armenian rivers present in general a serene, retarding flow that gather fury only when piercing mountains or heavy beds of lava.

After crossing the bordering mountains of Armenia, a vast, almost endless horizon immediately captures the eye. Undulating valleys and plains in yellow-reddish hues unfold wave after wave, blending into the wide slopes of mountains and circular outlines of their snowcapped summits. Through the dry and clear air the eye can penetrate the distance over one hundred miles. Great volcanic protrusions dot the landscape here and there. There are no forests, only traces of vegetation or thickets on the slopes of narrow valleys. In damp weather, the arid ground at the higher altitudes presents a semblance of mountain

pastures. In the dry season it is covered with the flora of arid regions (Xerophilous). The verdure of orchards, vineyards, and vegetable gardens along the banks of lakes, rivers, and brooks on the plains softens the monotony of tilled fields.

There is hardly another land beside Armenia whose geographic situation, relative position, and physical formation have so decidedly and inexorably affected and shaped the fate and fortune of its inhabitants. The physiography of the Armenian

plateau has rendered possible the development of a social organism capable of creating a culture and recording a history of its own.

As a singular geographic entity, Armenia has imparted a decided individuality to its history which reflects the topographic characteristics of the land and its physiographic pattern.

—(From "Armenian Quarterly," vol. 1, No. 2, 1946)



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BELLARA

RICHARD SIMONIAN

"The study of the beautiful is a duel in which the artist cries out with fear before he is vanquished."

— BAUDELAIRE

The girl sat quietly with her legs drawn up beneath her robe, and the two men huddled up to the fire next to her watched the beautiful girl anxiously, waiting for her to speak. Several yards behind them, a current of water flowed past silently; its surface was serene and untroubled except for an occasional ripple, but the swiftness of the current and the blackness of the water suggested great depth, perhaps immeasurable. The opposite bank of the river was shrouded in a darkness which concealed the land that lay beyond it — if there was anything beyond. Sitting in the ring of light around the fire, the two men and the girl conversed in low voices, and they seemed indisposed to exploring the shadows that lay beyond their immediate vicinity, the only region of the seemingly huge cavern which was illuminated.

"Yes," the girl said, "it is a mystery, but all life is a mystery. Tell your stories now, and perhaps we can solve the riddle of our individual mysteries."

"But," protested one of the men, "who are you? Why are you here?"

"Patience. Out of politeness, if nothing else, you must tell me first why you are here, and then you shall learn about me."

The flames, dancing magically on the blue silken robe which she wore, illuminated her body uncovered at the arms and

neck, and cast an ethereal glow about her face. And although her features were European, her skin, ambered slightly like tarnished ivory, evoked a certain Oriental quality; her hair, black and straight, hung loosely over her shoulders to the center of her back. As she sat with her head bowed, looking into the fire, waiting for the men to speak, the heat from the flames reflected off her face and glistened momentarily on the pink flesh of her lips.

Both of the men were bewildered, and they stared at each other incredulously, trying to perceive some unreality in the other's being, still unable to believe the strange affair to be anything more than a phantasy of their imagination.

The man kneeling on the girl's right passed a hand across his mouth in a curt sweep, and then cleared his throat, signaling that he was ready to speak. The clothes he wore seemed characteristic of his personality: he was simply dressed in a white cotton shirt and coarse blue trousers. His intensely red hair lay long and matted over his forehead and suggested, at first glance, a certain rebellious individuality.

"Well, since the situation at hand seems to be equally confusing to all of us, I imagine the events which brought you here are as incredible as those responsible for my presence — but frankly I doubt it. I still refuse to believe that any of this is true —

I expect to wake up at any moment and find that I've been dreaming. But in any case, actual or not, this is what happened to me.

"I have a small place in the country, outside of London, where I carry on my law practice as the senior partner in a successfully established law firm. On Friday afternoons, I drive out to my little retreat to spend a quiet week-end pursuing my favorite pleasures, fishing and painting. The latter by far the most enjoyable, for I must admit having won several prizes in amateur exhibitions, I consider myself quite the accomplished artist." He paused a moment and smiled, a little indulgently as if forgiving himself this bit of self-approval, before continuing: "It was on Saturday afternoon about three o'clock — I know the time, for the light effect was exactly what I had been waiting for to finish the canvas — when, at that most inopportune moment, a shout reached my ears from somewhere beyond the clump of bushes behind me. The caller appeared to be in distress, but the voice sounded distant, and unwilling as I was to leave my work at the moment, I judged it to be coming from across the river which lay just beyond the growth of Woodland and thereby, outside my line of duty. Seconds later, I heard the shout again, only louder with a more persistent ring, and this time I dropped my brush and sprung up. It was a woman's voice calling, but by the time I had run through the bushes the 'help' had become a hopeless whimper of abandon, and there I saw a long mass of twisted black hair in the water being carried helplessly downstream. The river at that point was little more than a brook, and I dove into the water without a moment's hesitation, having no doubts that I would save the girl if she had not already drowned. And I would have saved her! But I was no more than an arm's length away, when the water, which had been as calm as that river flowing behind us now,

suddenly became a mad, swirling torrent, and it formed a whirlpool of such violence that escape was unimaginable. Both the girl and myself were immediately sucked into this as abruptly as leaves might be caught off a tree in a whirlwind. For what seemed no more than an instant I had a spinning sensation, and my body seemed to be hurtling through space at an enormous speed; this was accompanied by nausea, the same peculiar feeling one has while regaining consciousness from an anæsthetic. Upon recovering my senses, I found myself as I am now, sitting beside you next to this fire." In a doleful tone, after pausing for a few seconds, the artist added as an afterthought, "I only regret not having rescued that girl; before we were carried away, I glimpsed her face — it was sheer, absolute beauty. I swear she was some goddess of pulchritude. I have never encountered such a lovely symmetry of grace and elegance — a face all artists dream of painting someday! If only to put that face on a canvas. Ah, but. . ." These last words he spoke almost unwillingly, to himself, completely unaware of the man and woman beside him, and then he lapsed into a melancholy silence, unbroken for several minutes before the younger man began to speak.

While the artist had been telling his story, the youth had been watching the flames as they pinpointed and sparkled in the depths of the girl's dark eyes which remained half-closed while she gazed into the fire. Her face held a strange fascination for him, and when she spoke the continued to watch her with an avid stare.

He wore the blue uniform of some military order, but it was faded and crumpled to such an extent that his rank and nationality remained indistinguishable. One could see that he had recently been exposed to a great deal of sunlight which had bleached his blond hair an ash white, and this contrasted handsomely with the reddish flush

of his cheeks. He gestured enthusiastically as he spoke, punctuating his speech with the wave of a hand or a short, boyish laugh, directly always towards the girl.

"Your's was an incredible adventure," he began, "but I think you will find mine even more astounding. To begin with, the very circumstances of my experience were unusual. I am an aviator in the Royal Air Force, stationed in North Africa, at the command base in Algiers — that is, I was stationed there; I probably am listed as missing or deserted by now, for it was last Saturday afternoon when it happened. I was on messenger duty, flying mail to the various British outposts in northern Africa. I was headed for Oran, my last stop for the day. Oran is on the outskirts of the Saudi-Ben-Hara, the largest desert in that part of the country, and I had flown half the length of the Ben-Hara, when, for reasons still unknown to me, the plane's engine began sputtering, and then completely failed. Fortunately, being in familiar territory, I took my bearings quickly and headed the plane in an easterly direction towards an oasis about sixty miles away. I glided for about twenty miles, and finally had to bring it down. For two days and two nights I tramped through that God-forsaken desert with nothing but a canteen of water and a compass that I had salvaged from the plane. The way the sun blazed through my clothing, I might just as well have been naked; several times I thought my body would light on fire. No way to escape it, you know. For miles, nothing but rotten yellow sand that fills your nose and mouth. You can't breathe. And all this without so much as a single blade of grass to hide behind. When I was too exhausted to walk any further I fell on my hands and knees, tied a handkerchief around my face to keep from swallowing any more sand than I could help, and crawled. When I finally arrived at the oasis I dragged myself to the edge of the muddy little waterhole,

and cried. I would have traded my soul for a gulp of water from that mud hole — but I couldn't. My throat had become so irritated and swollen by the sand that I couldn't swallow. Too exhausted to move another step, I rinsed out my mouth and fell asleep there on the grass, at the edge of the water. . .

"You can imagine my surprise the next morning when I opened my eyes to find my head resting in the lap of the most beautiful girl that I had ever seen. Even in my dreams I had never conceived such loveliness. She sat there sponging my face with a wet cloth, and all the while looking down at me with the most beguiling expression on her face. Her long dark hair framed her lovely bronzed face in a strange aura of sensuality, and as she leaned over me — I can't explain why — I was seized by an uncontrollable desire to possess this beautiful creature — there, at that very instant. Some force outside myself seemed to be compelling me towards her — it was frightening; perhaps I was sunstruck. One moment I was lying in her lap, and the next my face was against her's. I tasted the sweet warmth of her mouth again and again, and fell into a delicious frenzy of passion. Although she did not succumb to the same excitement, she was a pliant victim, and offered no resistance to my advances. But suddenly, she drew herself away, and for the brief second our eyes met, I thought I detected a fleeting expression of scorn in her eyes. I shall never forget that piercing glance. Then, without warning, she jumped up and threw herself into the waterhole only a few feet away from where we were sitting. Not at all doubting that I could save her, since the waterhole was only a small affair, and quite shallow, I jumped in after her without a second's thought, when, suddenly, the same strange phenomenon which this gentleman experienced under a similar circumstance also confronted me. I was less

than an arm's length of her when a whirlpool formed around her body and immediately sucked her out of sight into the center of the writhing foam. But I didn't have a moment to think about this awful prodigy, for I, too, was caught up by the maelstrom and quickly followed the girl into its swirling depths. This gentleman described the ensuing sensations quite accurately. Mine were exactly the same. I traveled through what seemed like endless space to find myself sitting here beside you next to this fire."

When the aviator stopped speaking, the artist, who had been listening intently, cleared his throat and commented in perplexed tone, "... It seems odd that both our misfortunes were caused by water, a whirlpool in particular, and in both instances a beautiful girl should be the source of our misfortunes. . ."

"Perhaps", continued the aviator, nodding towards the girl, "this young lady can explain the peculiar circumstances in which we find ourselves. *You*," he addressed the girl, "seem to be familiar with this strange place, and not at all perplexed by this odd dilemma of ours. Do you know where we are? . . . and is there any way to get out of this hellhole? . . . It would be wise to begin by telling us who you are."

The girl listened in silence. Her calm, lovely face radiated an enigmatic expression of tenderness, and when the young flyer had stopped speaking, she took his hand in hers and spoke in a voice mysteriously profound and sincere, filled with a wisdom far beyond her seeming youth:

"My name is Bellara, gentlemen, and you are right. I am not frightened as you are by what you call this 'strange situation', for I have been in this place many times before, and I have grown to accept it as not unusual. That you are frightened is understandable. You are disturbed not only by

the novelty of your surroundings and your recent experiences, but also because you are ignorant of what is going to become of you in the immediate future. But then, ignorance and novelty have always distressed men, and since neither you nor I can do anything to alter our respective destinies, I suggest that we do not overly concern ourselves with them."

"But who are you, and where do you come from?" interrupted the artist.

"I have told you that my name is Bellara, and I come from no special place. I am a wanderer who is forced to flee from land to land, always in disguise. To escape my pursuers, I become fire without heat, thunder without lightning, a soul without a body."

"I have always been sought by men. They are, in fact, destined to seek me. Many, yes many, have tried to overtake me, and some even, the illusioned, believe that they have, but they have discovered only some imposter who happens to resemble me.

"One person in particular, a man who recently died, could have told you about me, for he devoted his entire life to my quest. For years he groped in my pursuit. The poor devil thought that once he had found me, he would attain happiness, so he traveled throughout the world, forever swimming rivers, climbing mountains, and struggling through jungles with what seemed an unceasing vitality and inexhaustible store of energy. Finally, in his travels, he came upon a huge wall which blocked his path, and he was certain that it was only that wall which stood between himself and his quarry, between himself and happiness: my capture. He laboured on for many more years before he devised a means to scale this last barrier, but finally he succeeded in reaching the other side. But the poor man was so tired from the years of searching

that he immediately collapsed from exhaustion beneath the wall, never to partake of the happiness which he had for so long pursued."

"You are talking riddles, and telling us nothing", said the red-haired artist, quite exasperated.

"She is playing us the fool," said the aviator, equally annoyed. "Stop this foolish talk, and tell us who you are."

Unmindful, and as if not hearing the interruption, the beautiful girl continued, but in a different tone and manner: the emotions which her thoughts registered across her face were unaffected, and she spoke again in the soft and artless voice of innocence — the innocence pure of an untried chastity.

"Believe me, I speak the truth, and I am what I am telling you, unattainable as the eternal melody, that perfect note of music sought by every wandering minstrel. It is everywhere, and nowhere. Wafting fairy like on every breeze that passes, heralded by the mermaids in the sea, and the pixies in the forces, it whistles plaintively through the branches of limbless trees, never settling, but always living to die and live again."

She stopped speaking, and smiled knowingly at the two men who watched her intently, fearing perhaps that this exotic beauty would suddenly spring up and disappear from their sight as mysteriously as she had come. The fire crackled plaintively as the flames burnt lower, and in the background the river rustled faintly as the passing water brushed against the smooth rock of its bank. Bellara moved closer to the warmth, and the silken robe slipped off her legs, revealing her exquisitely shaped calves and thighs and her tawny skin was illuminated provocatively by the fire. She continued silently gazing into the flames, oblivious to the enchanted stares of the two men.

"You're beautiful, beautiful," murmured the youth, "just like the girl in the desert — yes, that's it, the girl in the desert! He rose to his feet mechanically, almost unknowingly, and knelt beside her, placing his hand on her bared leg.

"Stop that, you savage!" shouted the artist, as he leapt to his feet terribly angered, and, with a resounding slap across the younger man's face, he knocked him from the girl's side.

"Why don't you mind your own business," cried the flyer, as he lay sprawled on the ground, rubbing his head.

"This is my business," answered the artist, looking down at the youth.

His face flushed by the shock of the blow, he hesitated a moment, and then moving quickly, he seized the artist by the ankles and threw him to the ground.

"You hypocrite! you just want her for yourself."

Both men, enraged, fought furiously, cutting themselves badly as they rolled and tumbled on the hard stone floor, each trying to gain the advantage by tearing himself from the other's grasp. The youth was the weaker of the two, but through his greater agility, he succeeded in slipping from the artist's hold. He jumped up quickly, ready to pounce down on the other man again if he attempted to rise. But unsuspectingly he stood on the very brink of the torrent of water, which silently rushed past behind him. The artist, seizing the opportunity, quickly hurled himself at the youth, who, losing his balance, fell backwards, dragging the artist along with him.

Splashing loudly, the river swallowed up the two men in its black depths, and the water showered down on the bank, splattering flatly on the stone; the rippling wavelets wreathed the water's surface momentarily, and then merged silently with the current which once again resumed its tranquil flight.

As the shadows approached noiselessly

to snuff out the last retreating embers of the fire, Bellara rose to her feet, and her face made visible, for the last time, by the light of the glowing coals, revealed not

the slightest distress — not even concern, but only a serene apathy — the same unfeeling indifference of the sand sifting interminably through the hourglass of time.



THE POETRY OF THE ARMENIANS

LUC-ANDRE MARCEL

Luc-Andre Marcel, the young French poet who a few years ago translated the classic Armenian poet Gregory of Narek's work "Narek" into the French language, has penned the following beautiful tribute to the poetry of Armenia, published in the special issue of Houssaper, Armenian language newspaper of Cairo, Egypt, December 18, 1954, dedicated to 160th anniversary of the founding of the Armenian newspaper.

The more I hear the more my anger rises for the awful crime which we Europeans committed against such a people by forsaking such a creative, such a great, such a tragically great people and by ignoring their achievement. This is a crime for mankind, fully the equal of the other awful crime which was committed against you. Let us say no more of it. Suffice it to say the deep, incurable pain which is yours is also mine. Believe me, I have something more, — a sense of shame, shame, do you understand? Let us say no more of it.

From the first day I felt that this music, this poetry would fill my life, bringing to me spiritual and intellectual delights, but I see that the case of the Armenian people is also a case of the conscience. I had started out in search of poetry, I wanted to drink of its wine, to drink and to offer it to my fellow-countrymen, but now I see that, instead of the wine, I must offer them your blood, the Armenian blood. I have become the soldier of that blood, the spilled blood of your poets, the soldier of your people's righteous cause.

HENRY

PASCAL TCHAKMAKIAN

I

Henry could clearly see, now, through the telescope mounted on his automatic Mauser, the doe he had pursued since day-break.

He was about 500 feet from the animal, but the powerful instrument brought a clear image of the brown and white body contrasting with the immaculate and almost blinding whiteness of the snow. The doe, in the hazy morning light and the profound silence resting at the edge of the wood, was quietly browsing. She pulled, here and there, some frozen vegetation emerging through a shining collar of half-melted snow and slowly chewed while gazing around with a peaceful indifference.

She walked about the rare and valuable remnants of grass with a natural and unambitious majesty, painting gracefully some frail little hollows in the coat of snow. And, sometimes, when her chestnut skin lightly shaved the tip of a plied bough, a misty rain of white powder would glow in a flash when it met the sun's light between the trees.

The winter's sun, a lone reddish eye in a cloudless sky, had spread, on the branches bent as a Man in prayer, beams and rainbows, sparkling or glittering rays, sprinkling in the atmosphere or partly subdued by the glow of the snow.

And the depth of the wood, where Henry was hidden, was transformed into a crystal palace, with trees fostering shadows as limpid as clear water, while the deep brown color of their trunks gave the impression of yellow and light black.

It was one of these typical winter mornings — hardly warm and crystalline — one can find on a mountain, woven by Mother Nature and unforgettable, as a strange legend.

Henry, lying flat on the snow, a sack under his elbows, was in a shooting position. Carefully, when the doe stood motionless, chewing instinctively a mouthful, he had pointed the center of the two black perpendicular lines crossing the lenses several inches below the front shoulder of the animal, that is, near to the heart for a quick kill.

A bullet was in the chamber.

He slowly pulled the frozen trigger beyond the security position, and got ready to fire in a split second.

But Henry waited, watching, with a sort of unknown pleasure, the doe innocently wander around.

He could see his own breath, condensed by the cold, slowly climb in the crisp atmosphere and vanish in the big nowhere spread above the trees. And although he felt the snow melt under the warmth of his body, the morning frost pricked his face and his bare hands like thousands of needles and stretched his skin, he postponed the ultimate thrust of the piece of iron, for no apparent reason.

Most hunters, at least those who are not justified by hunger or self-protection, do wait before shooting, be it an hour or a microsecond.

They do wait as they treat themselves with a kind of intangible pleasure one has at letting a favorite meal conquer his nos-

trils, at smelling the spirit of a certain brand of whisky hovering about a filled glass, or at glancing at the walk of a woman we truly love. But the hunting pleasure, as Henry's, is not so strangely linked with some unconscious animal reactions still left in the human soul since time immemorial.

A cat plays with a mouse before giving it the coup de grace, or a snake will hypnotize a frog on the weedy shore of a silent pond, although having the complete assurance of victory. And though man may find some reasons or cogent explanations, this moment, as a crucial cross-road, is the thrilling instant sought in hunting. Not necessarily the search, the hike, the scouting, the contemplation of Nature's beauties, but say perhaps for this Stone Age's instinct of conservation, when man and animal were almost on the same level of values.

And during this moment, one can notice, in the eyes of man, or cat, or snake, that glowing expression which has nothing, as it is a strange combination of feelings which paint in man an unknown picture, and in animal the cruelty of the struggle for life.

II

Henry held his breath.

He squirmed a little in the snow, tightened his grasp on the trigger. A chilly flow passed through his body when he checked his shooting position. The sun had some golden stripes wandering on his back, and, focusing again all his nerves and muscles for the final effort, he remained, for several seconds, as motionless as a statue.

The doe had bent her delicate and almost feminine head over the rare grass buried in the white mantle of winter, and although her lips were softly scattering the snow, the teeth searching the bottom of the stems, she stood still.

Her long ears were turning, now and then, in every direction, showing some

signs of contentment, as a dog swinging its tail.

There was a deep and unfettered quietness, hardly troubled by the purrs of a quiet wind softly swinging the loaded branches or spreading, on drifted snow-piles looking like giant tongues, a sort of white sand.

All was peace. And at the rhythm of time, these thoughtless matters opened the kingdom of silence creating in such a perfection forms, colors, shapes amidst the subtle, wild and ingenious architecture woven by winter; a silence where the human soul suddenly shifts to unknown, intangible worlds, to abstract life, to this "Beyond" which sometimes rings in our ears, although composing an unidentifiable tune.

But the cracking shot of the bullet, thrust with fury into the air, suddenly shattered the calm atmosphere, meeting its aim.

Its sound bounced from one tree to the other, as a ball, shook some boughs which let a white dust fall on the ground, and gradually, as a plane loses its momentum and roaring noise, it got lost in the hedgeless emptiness stretched beyond the toothed ridges of mountains.

The doe, as the bullet pierced her heart, had jumped on her hind legs. She stood motionless for a split second, quickly lost the sign of life in her eyes, trembled spasmodically, and emptying her lungs in a heart-rending sigh, she fell on the snow.

Indifferent, the silence covered again the wood.

Henry lifted his eyes from the telescope. He felt the heat of the gun hover near his cheeks, and, breathing very deeply, a thin vapor flew from his nostrils.

In his heart, he had the feeling of a man coming back from work, gazing at his house, at his lawn, possessed with this very human sentiment we call the "peace of the Soul", or this other feeling of a well-done job.

But Henry sensed for a moment, without knowing the source of it, this intangible notion we all get at some crucial cross-road of life, such as a bridegroom putting a ring on his bride's finger, the announcement of a birth. . .!

Henry felt it as he instinctively ejected the empty cartridge which popped up in the air and sunk in the snow without a noise. A sort of doubt passed through his eyes, but, freeing his mind from this sentimental and perhaps too human grasp, he blew in the opened gun and jerked the bolt to its previous position.

As he got up, a stream of warmth reconquered his numbed arms and feet.

With a stroke of indifference in his eyes, he looked around to find but some glassy shadows stuck on the snow and hear his own heart beat its pendulum-like rhythm.

He lowered the mouth of his gun toward the ground, took his sack lying deep in the snow, and, shaking it thoroughly without hurry, he dropped it at the foot of a tree where his skis and sticks had previously been put.

And he walked toward the doe, a brown bulk of silent flesh contrasting with the immaculate whiteness.

His steps were slow and heavy as his feet sank in the spotless coat of snow to print some big and oblong hollows.

But as he came about a hundred feet from the dead animal, near the edge of the wood, a heart-rending lament sounding like the lowest chord of an organ, with a somewhat human touch, tore again the silence.

For a second, Henry trembled. His heart beat faster, almost ready to blow up in his chest, as the bellowing voice, an even note with a hidden tone of sorrow, ran through his body like an electric shock. Stopped, frightened not by fear but by a sort of guilt, he dared to look behind him.

He slowly turned his head around . . . to see a massive stag lifting his head, his

opened mouth screaming that ghastly note.

Henry couldn't move. Impotent, his nerves were stuck, benumbed and his brain unable to forward any order to his muscles.

He was just awed, bewildered, trying to understand what was happening, and for a moment his mind was floating in oblivion.

The stag, ending his lament, gazed in the direction of the dead doe. His head, perfectly balanced upward by the weight of the horns, stood motionless with the gravity and the self-assurance of a wise man.

Some mellow rays of light struck the brown fur spread below his throat and between his front legs.

To Henry, still in the same position, it looked like a ghost — something coming from another world. He felt the weight of the rifle on his arm. There were enough bullets in it, but he couldn't move it, as if paralyzed.

And graciously waving his head at the rhythm of his steps, the stag walked toward the brown bulk.

He passed several yards from where Henry was standing, but went by as if he wasn't there.

He stopped in front of the dead body and bent his head very smoothly. The tip of his lips wandered around the doe's head, along the neck, and came down to the opened wound. From it, a hollow carved in the chest, a film of red-purple blood tinted the snow.

His tongue brushed the skin along the stiff neck and the wound, searching, by instinct, a sign of life. But in spite of his inaudible laments, his search for life, he understood by instinct that there was no more life left in the doe.

The stag lifted his head toward the edge of the wood and bellowed, for a second time, the same droning and somewhat dramatic sound. Henry had hardly recovered his senses. The scene reminded him of some pages of wars, of tragedies one could read every day in a newspaper, of dramas

... and he wondered whether GOD had put something human in these animals or if, by nature, they were sentient to love. He even remembered his own wife, his own love . . . but couldn't understand exactly this picture which switched in his mind but with hazy and foggy outlines.

And as he was fighting with the depth of his soul, the stag had bent his head, put his lower horns under the doe, fought a little to secure the balance of the inanimate body, and, slowly lifting his head with the lifeless animal, he walked toward the edge of the wood. Henry knew what was behind the last row of trees, and suddenly goaded by the power of intense curiosity, he followed the steps of the stag.

Just at the end of the wood started the edge of a precipice. The stag stopped. He overlooked a huge valley, proudly looking at the waving rows of brown ridges, of snowcapped summits dazzling in the dis-

tance. The body of the doe was slightly swinging on the protruding horns. Suddenly bending his hind legs, the stag hurled into the open space.

Henry, hurrying, saw but two bodies vaguely float in the emptiness, bounce from one rock to another and separately land on the top of a long white apron stretched at the foot of the mountains.

The two bodies, hitting the snow, rolling close to each other, snow-balled and created an increasing avalanche.

From every side the snow slipped, slid, rushed down as a solid river and thundered its roar which echoed from one mountain to the other.

Henry watched the two bodies disappear. The snow ran down, rolled, and disintegrated against the rocks, while he waited until the frightening maze slowly died away in decreasing waves.

SILENCE IS GOLD

PASCAL A. TCHAKMAKIAN

*Silence is gold, they said; Silence is gold.
But what kind of gold can never be told.*

*One day, alone in the Public Garden,
The day hardly born an hour ago,
Old Boston carved behind Emerson's pasture,
My eyes had met with true contentment
Another Man, who, also alone, was wandering
In the fresh, childish birth of the day:
The sun was warming the earth, the dew sparkling on the grass.
Near to each other, we looked; Our Human eyes,
These two wells of the Infinite,
Met, and conveyed what strange language it can use.
One world was looking into another one;
Strangers into a strange but common soil,
Strangers weary of being lone strangers,*

*Both of us, I thought, had truly wished
To drop a gentle word, a small "Hello",
A friendly nod, a smile or a "Fine morning".
Each of us, and this we knew too well,
Needed a Human warmth to calm these empty,
Sullen and mournful eyes of ours,
Tired of grasping at night, the whole Universe
In one glance, and in one thought, the entire Earth.
we wanted to talk in the humble Flesh's way;
We needed nearness, as children cling to mothers.
Perhaps, we'd talk sheer nonsense, of the weather,
Of our Love, of our Human misery or our hopes,
To prove our Souls that no man is a desert island.*

*For seconds, behind the curtains of our eyes,
We felt as one another; for what did I know
That he didn't? What was he that I wasn't?
Only fools think themselves superior to others.
And in those scant seconds, a word, a simple word,
A word which either hurt or cure the Soul,
A word might have been brighter than the rising sun,
Deeper than space and sweeter than sweet honey.*

*But, as Men are wary of their own shadows,
We passed each other, him and I,
Our hands stuck proudly in our pockets.
Who was I? Who was He?
Both strangers into a stranger world,
We drifted away, him, his way, me, my way.*

*Silence is gold, they still say. Silence is gold.
But a kind of gold no one ever sold.*

THIS WONDERFUL UNIVERSE

NUVER KOUMJIAN

YOU AND I

It is great to be the part of this wonderful Universe.

No one can expel us from it, for there is no other place to go. Once here, we will always be here. We belong to the great Whole; without us something would be missing, and this understanding makes one feel secure.

What a privilege to be able to think, to rejoice and take part in every thing!

Some One must have loved us very much in giving us this life. Joy swells within us when we realize that we too, every one of us, are here to stay! Deep in this reasoning; great is the joy of understanding.

Last night when I looked up at the blue sky filled with bright stars, I felt very happy, knowing that they belong to me as I belong to them and to all that fills this great whole.

We all, you and I, are as important as the greatest in this wonderful universe.

We ARE all, because we HAVE all.

YOUR MIND IS YOU

You are your mind. Your mind makes you. It can make you a king or a slave: your thinking pattern is you.

Before you speak, your mind has already spoken. It begins and ends every thing. It is a source that pours out with the measure you want. It is there to serve you; it is up to you to use it freely.

The mind in its unseen, unknown stage is the first and the last. Its decision makes

your life. It can take one to higher or the lower stage of life. It is the master creator. Everything belongs to it. It is a world in itself, and has in it all that there is in life.

It is the creator of life and death.

Your mind is yours alone, for it begins and ends with you.

HARMONY

Ugliness and beauty cannot live side by side. Where harmony is lacking confusion sets in. Harmony restores beauty and order; it is life's most complete form in which one can live the life of a king.

In harmony things grow and come to completion. The things that are smooth and inspiring come from harmony. It is the complete work of many different forms of beauty assembled to create the world of beauty.

In the heart of man lives all that is important to create harmony. In the presence of harmony all difficulties and sorrows disappear. Even the healing force is present in harmony.

We too are the results of the great harmony: for God's creations are made of harmony.

LOVE

The tenderness that nourishes the heart of man is love.

It is the essence of the flower, it is the beginning of the light. It has all the qualities of the good and beautiful. It changes life, it gives life.

Love in its source is pure, selfless and healing; its powers are immense. It grows around the heart to nourish it giving courage and understanding. It is more a giver than a taker. Its main purpose is to serve; to be happy and to make others happy.

When we know to love selflessly, giving out what we can, we receive the reward of abiding satisfaction.

Love is the highest gift God has put into the heart of man.

It is a virtue to know how to love.

SONG IN THE HEART

We cannot be still. Even if we are still, our heart sings in view of wonders around us.

We can take part in all joy that surrounds us and we voice the song of the singing heart.

We did not put it there, it was there when we came. We do not hear the song, for it is a silent song, it comes from a depth, clear and alive.

Many times when our mind is filled with noises, we cannot listen, for it muffles the sound of the song. But at times when we are calm, the song swells into a joyous concordance which we can capture in full.

This song gives us courage and strength. We grow taller spiritually by listening to it.

This song of the heart is our song, it belongs to us all.

LIFE IS A PURPOSE

Live for a purpose; find time every day to make plans for tomorrow. Living for a purpose gives to one a healthier and happier outlook on life.

Tho world is filled with purpose. Life is given for a purpose. Man has a purpose in life; life without purpose ceases to be interesting and alive.

Our days fly in joy, our nights reward us with peaceful slumber. The hope of tomorrow becomes a beautiful dream which

fills our days and nights. Life strives for best in everything.

No more time to look around with bored, empty eyes, no more time to sigh over unhappy thoughts. The whole world sings with us when we have and live for a purpose, for it takes part in the main purpose of the Universe, to fulfill a great and beautiful dream.

UNDERSTANDING

Understanding is one of many qualities that takes man to divinity. In its making it is noble, it shares the good with others.

When we understand, we become friends with others; no one then seems bad or unworthy to us. We are guided to do right, and this brings us peace.

How joyful and serene is the understanding heart. Loving and helping others, we close the wide gaps that separate us from each other.

Understanding is the master builder upon whose help we can rely in building a beautiful and lasting structure of harmony in life.

It is a great gift to understand a fellow being.

THE LAST HOUR

When at times all seems hopelessly dark in life, light slowly fading away and hope expiring, ready to give up exhausted, we let it go.

But suddenly a closed door opens to us, a light seeps in, a sweet voice whispers to us; a new awakening takes us bright and fresh, the life in its original way comes comforting and inspiring us to continue to go on. A new vista slowly opens to us, a new song born on our lips. This hour works for us with its magic, giving us back what we had lost.

The last hour is the beginning of a new life. It is a great saviour that rushes in at the right moment to save us from destruction.

The last hour is the beginning of another day. It is the magic hour in the life of man.

TRUST

Things annoy us at times, making us very unhappy; because the clear understanding of our being escapes us.

There are many unnecessary things in life that intrude and become our main preoccupation. The world seems to turn around them, and the larger we give time to them the stronger they become, finally harming us.

When one fears, he loses the balance of his happiness. Fear of death, fear of sickness and the fear of insecurity feed on our tenderest feelings, making our precious life miserable.

We are here without even our knowing; we cannot know beyond now, only trust and confidence can save the man.

Breathing becomes easier and normal, the mind clearer, the life joyful and valuable when we trust. Trusting makes life worthwhile.

It is a great virtue to know how to trust.

HEREAFTER

Every minute everywhere life is seething; the great creation is at work day and night. Worlds are born and others are dying continuously, and this continued change is life.

What happens that makes us all fearful and anxious for ourselves? Nothing ever stops. The world is life, without this change, it dies out.

We too are always alive. We might like a caterpillar, change color and shape, but we are always here; the spirit is always alive.

When we are in one place, we cannot be in another place at the same time. This is what happens: We change places but we are always the same. There is no death nor birth anymore to any one, once he has been here and has played tiniest part to keep the balance of this world.

Life is change, and change is life; without death there is no life.

What a relief one feels when after a tired day he awakens up the next morning fresh and renewed.

Hereafter is the awakening again, fresh and new after the end of a busy day.



LINDY

Second prize winning story in 1953 ASA Literary
Contest.

ANITA KHANZADIAN

Lindy kicked the pebble ahead of her. She played the game everyday as she walked home from school. The idea was to kick the pebble from the school yard all the way home — the same pebble. If she kept it on the sidewalk, she would place it on the window sill of her bedroom, along with her other pebble-trophies. She had become quite expert at it. Soon the game would bore her, she thought. Lindy didn't like easy games. She never played hop-scotch or house with the girls. She was the best out-fielder on the seventh grade boys' baseball team. It has taken months of teasing and pleading and hard, grueling practice before the fellows finally accepted her. Now she was starting to think about football. If she developed a sure, hard kick over the summer, maybe she could play football with the boys in the fall. This kicking the pebble, she concluded, would help develop her kicking aim.

There were only two blocks left and she would be home. Lindy took a deep breath to let the fresh April air into her body and caress every nerve. Why can't it be spring all the time, she mused. Spring is too beautiful and gay and colorful and alive to come for just three months a year. She stopped a moment to observe the newly-returned Robin Red-breast. Proud Robin was on the lawn pecking away at a tuft of grass. Lindy cautiously crept up behind it. How close could she get before the robin would sense her presence and flee in fright? Lindy wanted to stroke it. Once she had

come so near. Her hand had been only a few inches away from Robin's feathery down when a mosquito bit Lindy and she yelled from anger and surprise. Robin disappeared more quickly than a magician's rabbit. This must be the same robin, Lindy thought. It behaved exactly the same way the other one had. Suddenly the robin flew and perched on the branch of a nearby tree. Lindy smiled. She loved the bird anyway. She loved everything and everybody. She even loved the worm that the robin had left half-pulled out of its subterranean abode, and the two dead leaves of a year past that clung in their dampness to Lindy's dungarees. Lindy felt that all her dearest and oldest friends had returned. That's how Lindy felt about spring. She untied the ribbon that secured her long mane in a pony-tail and let the breeze blow freely through her hair.

She started to run so she could more tangibly feel the soft breeze brush her face. Yes, all her friends had returned. Her daddy was returning too! This beautiful spring day with its glowing colors was in welcome for him. Mother had taken him to another clinic in another city for treatment. Maybe there would be good news today. She had overheard the doctors conferring with mother once. They had said that daddy would be ill indefinitely, and that he could never hope for complete recovery. Well, she wouldn't believe it! There wasn't a thing in the world that would keep her daddy sick when the fishing season began!

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In spite of her optimism, Lindy couldn't help feeling a little uneasy over the doctors' verdict. Doctors went to school for years and years and were very wise men, and they were usually right about things like this. Well, they're wrong about my daddy! He's not like anybody else, and he would never let a thing like being sick keep him down!

In her excitement to get home and greet her father, Lindy ran faster, and unwittingly ran under a ladder. She didn't even realize it until she had gone through. Her face whitened. Running under a ladder was very bad luck — the worst kind of bad luck. She'd have to be especially cautious for the remainder of the day. But what could possibly go wrong on a day like this! God was in too good a mood today to let anything go wrong, she decided, and continued on home.

Lindy was all out of breath when she reached the house. She took no notice of the unusual number of cars parked in front of her home, but instead, ran excitedly into the house, happily calling, "Daddy! I'm home!" But her exclamation was cut off at the doorway. The parlor was filled with people. All friends of the family — but this was only four o'clock. Mother was sitting on the couch, completely immobile, like an old statue. Without saying a word to anyone, and not giving a chance to anyone to speak to her, she ran upstairs — to daddy's room. Before she reached his room, she called in a quivering voice, "Daddy, it's Lindy. I'm home. . . ." But there wasn't the accustomed reply. The room was in perfect order, as though it were expecting a guest. Lindy stood rigid, fearfully surveying the empty room. "Daddy . . ." she whispered, afraid to intrude on the silence and cold order of the room. A warm hand on her shoulder made her whirl about suddenly. It was her aunt. For a moment, they just looked at each other. The kind eyes of her aunt were red and glistening. I

know what she's going to tell me, thought Lindy, but I won't listen. No, I won't listen. Daddy will come home tomorrow. He *has* to come home tomorrow. He promised he would. Daddy never would break a promise to me! Aunt Ella's lips were forming some words, but no sound came out. Neither had said anything. Finally, Aunt Ella began, in a tight voice.

"Lindy, your daddy won't be coming home today . . . he won't ever be coming home. . . ." Lindy pushed away her aunt's hands from her shoulders, when she tried to comfort her. Not knowing what to do and unable to say anything, Lindy flung herself on the bed and wept hurt, anguished tears. She didn't feel her aunt gently stroking her hair.

Lindy sat quietly on the edge of the fish-pond in the back-yard, thoughtlessly disturbing the stillness of the water by making circles with her finger. She didn't think she could ever stand to go to another funeral. Daddy had never liked hot-house flowers, and they were the only kind that people had sent him — large, ornate, and lifeless — in beautifully arranged bouquets. She herself had gathered an armful of wild flowers, with fresh odors, the kind daddy used to fill the house with. Someone had taken them away after she had carefully placed them in the center of the arrangement, surrounded by the wreaths. It must have been that horrible, cadaverous-looking man from the funeral parlor. The heady, sickening odor of the flowers made her nauseous. She was sure that she could never walk into a florist shop without thinking that she was at a funeral.

All at once, an overwhelming feeling of loss and pain enveloped her and she let fall a few salt tears that mingled with the waters of the fish pond. She remembered how just a few years ago, she had helped daddy make the fish-pond. It was her idea, and he had liked it. Just last year, he had planted the tree that shaded it. All around

her were the results of his loving labor. All she could do was remember now; she couldn't stop. Remembering now, was painful, but maybe someday it wouldn't be. But no, she didn't ever want to forget! Even if it did hurt.

Things come back to life in the spring. What was it the preacher had said? Nothing dies. The leaves that die in the autumn,

come back again in the spring, and so it is with a human being. But daddy wasn't a leaf. Besides, the leaves that dub in spring aren't the same ones that died in autumn. They are different. No matter what the preacher had said, all Lindy could feel, was that she missed her daddy, and she would go on feeling the pain of his absence forever and ever.



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M O T H E R

(A SHORT SHORT STORY)

LAWRENCE E. GAROOGIAN

He awoke one evening while his mother was attempting to play the role of the "gay divorcee" at the party next door, and he called out for her.

"Mommy."

There was no answer. The house was dark and quiet; he was afraid.

"Mommy. Mommy. Mommy."

He began to cry. His thin voice echoed through the house, and when he stopped the resulting silence was more frightening than before. He began to cry again, louder this time, until he was sick. He vomited his supper on the bed and stared at what he had done.

The house was cold, but he could not put the blanket around himself because it was on that too; he sat in the dark and shivered. The smell began to fill the air and he felt sick, but this time he controlled himself. He sat on the corner of the bed farthest away from what he had done and

his eyes tried to probe the shadows; everything in the room seemed unreal and hostile. There were areas of darkness and lighter areas through-out the room, all surrounded him. They seemed as if they were people, dark people. His body felt cold, but it was coated with perspiration.

He continued to cry.

His mother ran from the party and found him this way. She took him in her arms, rocking him back and forth as he cried with new vigor, and kissed his sweaty face until he was calm.

"Mommy," he kept crying in her ear, "I was so afraid without you. Please don't leave me alone again."

"Don't worry, my little darling," she crooned to him. "Mommy, won't leave you again . . . ever."

She clutched him to her breast and protected him against the night . . . for a little while. He went back to sleep and she went back to the party.

THE CEMENT WALK

A TELEVISION DRAMA

MOSES KONJOIAN

LIST OF CHARACTERS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE

MR. JOHNSON: About 70 years old, timid, apprehensive. He feels guilty because he cannot contribute to society as much as he would like.

DAVID: 24 years old, stern, sullen, abrupt. Deep down he is not a "bad" character. All his hard outside veneer is a suit of armor to hide his feeling of inferiority. He is big for his age, well-tanned, sinewy, unafraid of hard work.

SAM BAILEY: 65 years old. Now ailing from several recent heart attacks. He is kindly toward everyone, even including his much misunderstood son-in-law David. When he was younger, he was tall, willowy, energetic. Now, in his old age, he does not stand so tall, nor is he so dynamic physically; but, his past vitality is reflected in his alert eyes and his interest in everything about him.

CINDY: 20 years old, small-built, pretty. Her virtue is her devotion to her family; her vice is her failure to give direction to her husband David, or praise when it is due. She is the 'baby' of the family.

GARY: 39 years old, heavy-set, jovial, well-meaning, easy-going. He would rather walk a mile out of his way to avoid unpleasantness.

NINA: 29 years old. She is no leader although she should be since she is the oldest of the three girls. She exists, that is all.

CHARLIE: 35 years old. He has a fiery

temper, usually kept in check by his wife. He is an easy friend, a hard enemy. Likes to do favors, but be sure to thank him.

BARBARA: 26 years old. She is a leader, forward, aggressive when the situation requires it. She is the type of sister-in-law everyone should be fortunate in having.

JACK JOHNSON: 30 years old and nobody's fool. Can be mean when his uncle MR. JOHNSON is hurt.

ACT I

(The scene is nothing more than a bare suggested barn wall against which are stacked rows of tomatoes three tiers high. A framework of wood is used so the baskets will not crush when put one on top of another.)

(At FADE IN we see Mr. Johnson, an old man, selecting tomatoes and placing them carefully in a small basket in his hands. He is a bit secretive about this operation.)

(David appears into the picture, at first unseen by Mr. Johnson. David is 24 years old, stern, sullen, abrupt. He is big for his age, well tanned and sinewy.)

DAVID

(Ominously) you're on our land again, pop.

MR. JOHNSON

(Starts suddenly. Straightens up) Sam's always let me take vegetables.

DAVID

(Coldly) We're not running a charity farm. Get off our land.

(Mr. Johnson doesn't move. He stares at David trying to figure out on whose authority he speaks).

MR. JOHNSON

(Slowly) Sam know what you're up to?

DAVID

Makes no difference. I run this farm, so you mind what I tell you.

MR. JOHNSON

(Protesting) We've been neighbors long before you come.

DAVID

(Pushed too far. Grabs Mr. Johnson by his lapels) I'm warning you, pop — I'm not coming close enough next time to see who's trespassing. I'm going to shoot!

MR. JOHNSON

(Shakes himself loose) I ain't no dog! I can take a hint!

(David relieves Mr. Johnson of his basket).

DAVID

And while you're at it, remember this date. From now on, keep off.

(Mr. Johnson moves away out of view. David watches a second after the departing Mr. Johnson. He manages a smug contented smirk. Now David starts to walk away).

(DISSOLVE to front of farm house. It is an old well-built two-stories structure. As we view it we see, on the left, a small stoop of three steps that lead into the small hallway leading to the kitchen. To our right is a small shed with a flat roof. This structure is attached to the house proper. The sidewalk runs from the front of the stoop and terminates a bit beyond the shed. One or two uncomfortable looking lawn chairs are placed on the grass close to the shed).

(Camera PANS IN to the newly laid cement walk. At one corner of the cement is written "Bailey" and under it are these dates "1888 - 1919 - 1940." It is obviously a home-made printing. There is a board laid across the walk so people may walk in and out of the house without disturbing

the cement. A crude sign attached to the corner of the house reads "New cement — keep off, July 15").

(Sam Bailey comes out of the house. He is 65 years old. He is in overalls. It is obvious that it was put on carelessly. He is very sick and his movements are slow. He stops for a moment, surveys the cement walk, then steps off the board, picks it up and slowly lays the board aside. Then he goes to the sign, rips it off the house and tears it up. Now he inspects the cement walk. He is perturbed).

(From the side of the house comes Cindy, his 20 years old daughter. She is in dungarees but has managed to look feminine. When she appears she is removing cotton work gloves. She sees her father and runs over).

CINDY

(Firmly) Dad. What are you doing out of bed?

SAM BAILEY

I'm a farmer, not an invalid. You've had your way — I've been laid up seven days.

CINDY

(Gets one of the lawn chairs for him) You act just like a baby, sometimes.

(Sees the board removed) And that board — the doctor said 'no work' and you heard him, didn't you? Unless you don't want to get well.

SAM BAILEY

(Sits. He is exhausted) I'm dead already — at least to some people.

CINDY

What a thing to say.

SAM BAILEY

(Dramatically pointing to sidewalk) What am I to think? My tombstone!

CINDY

(Interrupts) Dad, don't talk like that. You asked Dave to make a sidewalk.

SAM BAILEY

But the writing —

CINDY

He thought writing your name would make you happy.

SAM BAILEY

And the dates? (*Smiles sadly*) Your husband's got imagination.

CINDY

(*Firm again*) Come on. You belong in bed.

(*Tries to help him up. He won't stir*)

SAM BAILEY

(*Gently*) Let me sit here — now that I'm up. (*Pause*) When your sisters come in I don't like them to see me cooped up in bed.

CINDY

(*Pleading*) But you're sick —

SAM BAILEY

(*Quietly*) You run along. I'm all right. I'll just sit here for a while.

CINDY

(*Still pleading*) Dad —

SAM BAILEY

You can't bury a man that's sitting up. (*With determination*) And I'm staying here until my daughters come in from the city. You can't stop me, Cindy. (*Sharply*) Where's David? (*David is coming into view*).

CINDY

(*With a worried look in David's direction*) Promise me, dad, no fighting.

DAVID

(*To Sam Bailey*) Well, you're up. Good for you. (*To Cindy*) Have I got news to tell you.

SAM BAILEY

(*Bitterly*) I see you finally got the sidewalk in.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



MOSES KONJOIAN

Writes Moses Konjoian: "I was born October 20, 1920, in Worcester, Mass. From an early age I knew I wanted to write poetry and plays and, indeed, turned them out by the dozens. I was fortunate at that time (1938-41) to put dramatic theory to practical application by writing and directing several one-act plays for the Armenian Church in Worcester. This gave me more valuable insight into dramatics than a ton of rules from a text book. However, I felt that formal education is prerequisite to sound writing. The G. I. Bill gave me the opportunity to accumulate what I think is the background. After my Army discharge in 1946, my wife and I moved to Cambridge. We did this for the reasons: First, because I had discovered that Harvard Square with its University, and its bookshops, stimulated me whenever I felt blue and disillusioned. Second, I was close to Boston University where I am at present half-way to my M. A. in English Literature. It is slow work because, through necessity, I must hold a Civil Service job in order to support my wife and 3½ year old daughter. My plan originally was to shelve my writing urge until my education was completed, but the urge, dormant so long, finally burst its shell. The result, a concentrated effort to succeed in television. *The Cement Walk* is my maiden television effort. I have since written two plays — much better orchestrated and resolved. But as yet, no success."

DAVID

(Pleased that he noticed it) Sure. Hey, how do you like it?

CINDY

(Cutting in) What's the important news, Dave?

DAVID

(To Cindy) What? Oh, yeah. *(Holds out basket)* Where do you think I got this from?

CINDY

(Impatiently) Don't play games. What are you trying to say?

DAVID

(Proudly) I just threw Johnson off the land — for good!

CINDY

(Reacts with shock) You did what?

(Sam Bailey is equally shocked. He says nothing but it is obvious that his reaction is not favorable).

DAVID

(To Cindy) He's a nuisance. You've said that yourself.

CINDY

He's one of dad's oldest neighbors. You should have had the decency to think of him.

DAVID

(To Cindy) I did! *(Turns to Bailey)* You've said yourself, more than once, he gets in the way. Well, haven't you? *(David knows Bailey is upset)* *(Turns to Cindy)* You don't need people like that. You got me. I'll do the work.

CINDY

(Cynically) Alone?

DAVID

What do you mean alone? What difference does it make what I did to Johnson? He's so old he can't even throw a fork full of hay —

CINDY

And the two boys who used to help out after school?

DAVID

(Quickly) They were loafers!

CINDY

(Throwing up her hands) I quit!

DAVID

(To Sam Bailey) Have I done such an awful thing? *(Pause)* You either run a farm to make money, or you support everyone and starve to death.

CINDY

You weren't supporting Pop Johnson. Every time his nephew fixed our tractor the favor was returned. You think he didn't appreciate the help we gave his uncle?

(Bailey stands up wearily)

DAVID

(To Bailey) How do you feel about it? You think I did wrong? Tell me.

CINDY

(To David) Leave him alone. He's not well.

SAM BAILEY

(Quietly, sadly) David. You can't get rid of people by waving a hand — or with a few dates in stone.

DAVID

(Puzzled) What are you talking about?

CINDY

(Sharply) Your masterpiece.

(Points to sidewalk) Tell him why you did this crazy thing.

DAVID

(Upset) Everything I do around here is crazy. I give up.

(He stalks off angrily toward the right)

CINDY

(To Father) I'm sorry. *(Goes toward him to help him).*

SAM BAILEY

(Starting for the house. Waves her off) Go on with your work.

(He walks slowly toward the house. At the stoop he takes a last look at the sidewalk, shakes head sadly, then enters. After he disappears Cindy goes toward the right where David is loading the truck. Perhaps

we can see the sideless flat body of the truck).

CINDY

(Defiantly calling) Davel

(Appears from other side of truck) What do you want?

CINDY

I want to talk to you.

DAVID

Okay. Mind if I keep on working?

CINDY

You can stop long enough to talk.

DAVID

(Deliberately stopping, folding his arms) All right. Talk.

CINDY

(Exasperated) Don't say it like that. You know you did wrong.

DAVID

Why did I?

CINDY

You don't treat people like you did.

DAVID

I do.

CINDY

It isn't right. You've been on this farm three years — you don't know how many times Mr. Johnson's helped out in emergencies — and without pay.

DAVID

He's made up for it in stuff he's taken.

CINDY

(Knows it is useless) You always have an answer. *(Suddenly)* Maybe you have a good one for this sidewalk. I told you he'd be upset.

DAVID

I don't see anything wrong with it.

CINDY

I think you honestly don't. *(Points to sidewalk)* This sidewalk — what were you trying to do?

DAVID

(Victoriously) Well! You going to let me explain?

CINDY

(Sarcastically) Yes. And I'm sure it'll be good.

DAVID

(Walking to writing in cement) It is. I'm not ashamed of it. I put down some of the important dates in your father's life. *(Kneels at the writing)* That's no crime, is it? *(Points as he calls out the dates)* 1888, that's the year he was born. In 1919 he bought this farm. In 1940 your mother died. Now that's important to remember. At least it would be to me. *(Stands)* What's wrong remembering dates that mean a lot? *(Glares at her expecting a reply)* See how you jump to conclusions? You don't try to understand me. As far as you're concerned I'm wrong in everything I do. And when your sisters find fault, you agree. When your brother-in-laws think I'm wrong, you agree with them. No wonder I hate weekends so much! The whole clan moves in to take over.

CINDY

You have no right to say that.

DAVID

It's the truth. What happened the other night's a good example —

CINDY

(Interrupting) They had reason to criticize you. A good farmer doesn't let hay sit out in the open all night. That's why they were mad.

DAVID

But it didn't rain. I knew it wouldn't. *(Shakes head slowly)* No, that's not the reason. It's because your father didn't believe me — because he went out in the middle of the night to pitch the hay in and got a heart attack. So I as usual got the blame from all of you.

CINDY

(Defending her family) They're my folks, Dave. I love them.

DAVID

That don't make them farmers. And ano-

ther thing — do they come to see us, or to laugh at us because we are farmers?

CINDY

(*Amazed at his accusation*) My own people laughing at us?

DAVID

The farm wasn't good enough for any of them, was it? They couldn't wait to marry and get away. That's proof enough.

(*Cindy turns away. She is on the verge of tears.*)

(*Off screen we hear the sounds of a car driving up and stopping. Sound of car door opening and closing.*)

DAVID

(*Cruelly*) You'd better wait! Your loved ones have just landed! Entertain them!

(*David exits quickly to the left, to the house.*)

(*Cindy turns toward the new arrivals. As Gary her brother-in-law appears with a small suitcase she tries hard to present a pleasant expression to hide her true feelings. Gary is 39 years old, heavy set. He is a jovial, well-meaning, easy-going character. His wife Nina, 29 years old, is directly behind him.*)

GARY

Hi Cindy. How are you?

(*He kisses her on her cheek. Then pulls back to look at her searchingly. He has sensed her tenseness.*)

Anything wrong?

(*Cindy nods an unconvincing 'no'*)

NINA

(*To Cindy*) (*She too has sensed something is amiss*) Is dad all right?

CINDY

(*Quietly*) Yes. (*Trying to appear casual*) Where's Charlie and Barbara?

GARY

They'll be here shortly. (*He is still uncomfortable at her tenseness*) Say, you sure nothing's wrong?

CINDY

Of course, I'm sure. Excuse me, I have to get vegetables for the salad.

GARY

I'll get them —

CINDY

No! Let me.

(*She exits to right. Gary watches her go with a puzzled look on his face.*)

GARY

(*To Nina*) There is something wrong.

NINA

I felt that myself.

GARY

Dave must be in his usual bad humor.

NINA

(*Kidding*) You make sure you stay in your usual good mood, hm? (*Pats his cheek*)

(*Sound of car off-screen coming to the farm and stopping. Sound of car door opening and closing.*)

(*Charlie and his wife Barbara appear. Charlie is about 35 years old. He is an easy friend but a hard enemy. Barbara is about 26 years old*)

CHARLIE

(*Drawing close*) Hi Nina. (*To Gary*) You passed us on the road, did you know?

GARY

(*Jokingly*) Of course. I have a better car.

CHARLIE

Pardon me!

BARBARA

(*Has been a bit to the side. She has had a chance to examine the sidewalk and the writing*)

Hey kids, get a load of this.

(*They gather around her, in front of the writing in the cement walk*)

NINA

(*Looks unhappily at sidewalk*)

For goodness sakes! A side show!

GARY

(*Flippantly*) More like a gravestone.

NINA

(*Turning to Gary*) Don't be a comedian —

CHARLIE

(*Angrily*) This is Dave's idea of a joke.

BARBARA

Are you so sure?

CHARLIE

Come on, don't pretend you don't know.

BARBARA

Anyway, we've had that out, haven't we? We're going to be charitable to him.

CHARLIE

What's the sense of acting decent. What he needs is a good beating.

(Unseen by them, Cindy has appeared. She has stood long enough to hear them. She has a basket with her containing vegetables — perhaps tomatoes, cukes, etc.)

BARBARA

(Harshly) That's enough, Charlie!

CHARLIE

You women don't understand about these things. I bet Gary feels like I do.

(Gary shrugs his shoulders half-humorously toward his wife as if to intimate 'I haven't said a word!')

(Charlie sees Cindy and attracts the others' attention to her with his head. They all become ill at ease, fearing she may have overheard them)

CHARLIE

(As she comes close, he puts his arms around her)

Hi Cindy. How's my girl?

(Cindy kisses him on the cheek coldly. She has not recovered from the argument with David as yet)

CINDY

(To no one in particular) Why don't you come in. Supper's almost ready. *(Starting toward the house)* I'll get Dave to come down.

(She exits to left. They all look after her. They have felt the tenseness in her. Charlie is slowly punching a clenched fist into his open palm)

(DISSOLVE to David's bedroom. His bedroom is reached on the second floor by a long flight of stairs. At the top of the stairs, directly ahead, is a window, and in front of it is a rocking chair. David's bedroom is to

the left of this hallway; Sam Bailey's to the right, directly opposite.)

(David is standing in front of the dresser mirror buttoning his shirt, and preparing to put on a necktie. Through the bedroom door we see Sam Bailey in the rocking chair. He is not paying attention to David and from the far away look on his face he is evidently in deep thought)

(Cindy appears at top of stairs. She sees her father and goes to him. He is looking out the window, and has his back to her. She shakes her head as if to say 'what can you do with a man like this?' She finally comes to her father)

CINDY

(Affectionately) Dad —

(He takes her hand without looking up) Why didn't you lie down for a few minutes?

SAM BAILEY

I'm all right.

CINDY

I hope so. Anyway, rest a few minutes, then come down. *(Pause)* They're here.

(He smiles at her. She gives his shoulders a slight affectionate squeeze, then enters David's room)

CINDY

(David's back to her. She says quietly) Dave — *(Since he does not answer, she comes closer and leans against his back with her arms around him, being feminine)* Why don't you come down and say hello?

(Show Sam Bailey attentive to the bedroom business between Cindy and David. He should occasionally shake his head sadly, slowly to show his disapproval)

DAVID

(Still dressing. Not facing her)

I got work to do.

CINDY

Come down just for one minute. *(Pause)* Dave, let's not fight anymore, please. I'm tired.

DAVID

I'm not fighting. I'm busy, that's all.

(Pause) I'm taking a load to market.

CINDY

(Stares in disapproval)

This early?

DAVID

Yes — from now on.

CINDY

To be spiteful?

DAVID

Not spiteful. If I stay out of sight there won't be any fights.

CINDY

There doesn't have to be — just act human..

DAVID

(Stubbornly) I'm not changing my ways. If you think I'm not human, that's too bad.

CINDY

(Bitterly) Good for you. It's the type of answer I expected, you should be grateful you're folks are dead. They'd be ashamed of you!

(Cindy exits hastily. This has hurt David. He rushes out into the hall and she disappears down the stairs. David's voice is cracking with emotion.)

DAVID

(Shouting after her) You have no right to talk of them. You have no right — and you'll be sorry. Just don't forget this day. Mark it down so you won't forget. You'll eat those words — you hear me?!

(By the time he has finished Sam Bailey is by his side and has taken his arm tenderly)

(David starts to break down emotionally but catches himself)

SAM BAILEY

(Gently) Sit down.

(David sits down on hassock by Bailey's rocking chair in hallway. David stares glassy-eyed at the floor. He is out of breath and he is catching his sobs)

SAM BAILEY

(Softly) You have got a soft spot.

(David tries to get up — to leave. Sam

Bailey detains him by placing a hand on his knee)

SAM BAILEY

Hold on. Take it easy (A long pause) Your folks aren't here anymore, Dave. I've got to take their place. I know it isn't easy. But listen to me and try to learn —

DAVID

(Sharply) I'm learning fast!

SAM BAILEY

(After a pause) Cindy loves you. And so do I. When we yell at each other we can do it and not mean anything —

(David rises quickly and enters his bedroom. He is nervous, so he begins fumbling with his tie in front of the mirror. Bailey comes in slowly after him. Bailey sits on edge of bed looking at David. It is obvious that he is not feeling well.)

SAM BAILEY

You've got to learn, Dave, to live with all kinds of people. Sometimes you got to swallow your pride —

DAVID

(Not impressed) Not me!

SAM BAILEY

It's all part of the game. You help me, I help you. I wouldn't have this farm today if it wasn't for that.

DAVID

I never had help in my life. I've done all right.

SAM BAILEY

You're so young Dave. And someday you'll find out people aren't bad. They don't laugh at you without reason. They don't purposely hurt you.

DAVID

(Turns Fiercely) Listen old man! When my folks died, I was helped, but I also heard what they said about me behind my back. Sure, they helped me. It was the right thing to do — for an orphan. It made me grow up fast knowing how people felt, and how they talked about me when they thought I wasn't listening. That's when I grew up — the day my folks died!

Don't talk to me about learning. I've learned the way that makes it stick: and that date has stuck to me pretty close.

SAM BAILEY

(Shakes head ruefully) Everything you do is measured by dates.

DAVID

So that's what's burning you up — the sidewalk!

SAM BAILEY

That's a small part. But you think a man's life is measured by dates — like a history book? You forget that a lot of living goes on between dates to make a life. You can't measure by dating everything; by blaming that date, or praising the other.

(David laughs mockingly)

DAVID

Oh, let's quit it, old man. I have no fight with you. And this is still your farm —

SAM BAILEY

(Trying to complete his speech) Dave —

DAVID

Don't go on. I've heard it all before: how much help the brother-in-laws give, and how grateful we should be, and all that

stuff. I don't want to hear any more sermons. . .

(David turns to finish dressing, as he continues talking. Sam Bailey in the meantime is beginning to feel short, sharp pains in his chest, at first not too severe)

DAVID

You keep thinking like you do. This is your farm. But when the day comes that you die I'm not going to put up with them, in-laws or not. I'm telling you now so you'll know.

(Unseen to David, Sam Bailey doubles up in pain)

Don't get the idea I don't respect you — I do. (deliberately) But when that day comes that you die —

(Turns. Sees Sam Bailey collapsed on bed. On Bailey's face is pain. David becomes alarmed)

Sam! Sam, what's the matter?

(Then, desperately, he rushes to the door. He is wild-eyed)

(Shouts down the stairs)

Cindy! Cindy! Help!

(FADE OUT)

ACT II

(FADE IN bedroom of Sam Bailey. It is morning. Bailey is in bed, very sick looking. The doctor who is with him is examining him with a stethoscope.)

(A clap of thunder outside breaks the silence of the room. Throughout the second act, ending only when the big quarrel scene has ended, the thunder should be heard at intervals. As the quarrel scene approaches, the thunder should be integrated with the emotional intensity of the scene, culminating finally in the downpour of rain)

(The doctor hears the thunder and he casts a glance toward the window apprehensively, then turns to complete his physical examination. Throughout all this Sam

Bailey is mentally alert, his eyes glued to the doctor. Finally the doctor is finished. As he puts his instrument away in his black bag he looks up)

DOCTOR

You'll be all right, Sam. (Pats Sam's hand and smiles. His words and his reassuring smile are obviously nothing more than bedside manners)

Remember now, plenty of rest. And no excitement. I mean it. (He picks up his black bag) I'll drop in on you this evening.

(Doctor exits to hallway. Nina is waiting for the doctor. She is nervous. She rises from the rocking chair when she sees the

doctor. The doctor, seeing her, closes quietly the door to Sam's room)

NINA

How is he, doctor?

DOCTOR

(Putting his bag down, he sits on rocking chair and starts writing on a prescription pad)

(Very professional) Well, he's resting quite comfortably. (Looks at her critically. She is nervously twirling a handkerchief) How about you? Been up all night?

(Nina nods 'yes') That's not very wise, is it? One sick person is enough, don't you think?

(Doctor finishes writing two prescriptions, tears them off the pad and hands them to her)

Get him started on these as soon as you can. (Then looks at her ominously) Are you his daughter?

NINA

Yes.

DOCTOR

Your father is a sick man. (Pause) Did anything happen yesterday to cause him to get unduly worried or upset?

NINA

(Unsurely) No —

DOCTOR

(To himself) Hm. (Her answer doesn't make sense in view of the evidence) (Gets up with bag in hand) Well, anyway, he's not to get out of bed. And keep him on a mild diet. (Points to prescriptions in her hand) I have it all written there.

(Smiles and squeezes Nina's hand) And don't look so sad. Your father isn't the first man with a coronary, and he won't be the last.

NINA

(Smiles weakly) Can we see him?

DOCTOR

Go right ahead, but naturally I want you and the others to use discretion. You understand? Bye, bye.

(The doctor exits down the stairs. Nina,

motionless, watches him leave. Then hesitantly goes to the door of the sick room, opens and enters quietly, then closes door part way. She stops there a second as another clap of thunder is heard, this time the storm much closer. She walks to the bedside, sits on a chair beside it, and looks tenderly down at him. For a moment their eyes lock)

NINA

You gave us quite a scare last night.

SAM BAILEY

(Sam smiles, then) Is it raining yet?

NINA

No, but it will soon.

SAM BAILEY

Since I can't get out of bed, you get the boys to fix the shed roof. It leaks pretty bad.

NINA

(Pats his hand reassuringly) They've been working on it all morning.

SAM BAILEY

(Nodding) Good.

(Another silence. They have so much to say to each other. Sam finally motions for Nina to come closer. She does)

(Slowly, as if to himself) Nina, someone has to keep the family together. (Pause) I like Dave, I want you to know that. He may be stubborn, but I guess he's a lot like I used to be. But he's got a lot of good points. And, he'll learn.

NINA

(Reassuring) We like Dave. We understand.

SAM BAILEY

(Relieved) I'm glad you do.

(Dissolve to downstairs kitchen. As we view the kitchen we see a table Center of kitchen. Upper right hand of screen is a hard looking couch with homemade bolsters. Left of screen is the door going to the hallway and to the stairs that lead upstairs. To the right of this door is an opening that leads to the small pantry and the sink. To the right of this opening is a tall,

two-doored refrigerator. The door leading to the outside of the house is on the right of the screen as we face the screen)

(The kitchen table has many used dishes. Evidently some of them have recently eaten.)

(Cindy is sitting at the table, in the depths of gloom and self-pity. Barbara is just pouring a cup of coffee at the stove. She sets it down in front of Cindy)

BARBARA

Have some coffee before you completely collapse. (Sits beside Cindy) You're not solving a thing acting like this. Come on, snap out of it.

(Barbara pushes cup closer to Cindy) Drink a little.

(Cindy picks it up listlessly, takes a sip)

CINDY

(Staring into coffee cup) I don't understand my own husband. (Looks up) Isn't that funny?

BARBARA

(Wearily) You've said that all morning.

CINDY

I told him not to write that in cement. He went ahead anyway. Called it a memorial. You should have seen dad when he saw it. (Pause) That Dave! Always fighting something!

BARBARA

He is your husband.

CINDY

Yes. And stubborn. And proud. I don't know why he's proud.

BARBARA

Why don't you give him reasons to feel proud? — and important?

CINDY

Even when he's wrong? Barbara, you don't know —

(As OFF SCREEN, sound of outside door opening and closing)

BARBARA

(Low) (She sees David)

Let's drop it. Dave's here

(David enters kitchen from outside. For

a moment he stands there surveying the occupants. He seems tired, grim, sullen. From this point on, until the scene between him and Barbara ends, he will be concerned with taking sandwich meat from refrigerator, going into pantry, getting a loaf of bread, and making several sandwiches.)

(David, after looking at them, starts his sandwich business with apparent unconcern for what is going on in kitchen)

(Nina enters from a door which leads to upstairs bedrooms)

BARBARA

(To Nina) How's dad?

NINA

(Overly cheerful) All right. I was just talking to him. By the way, I have to get this prescription filled.

BARBARA

(Indicating Cindy) Take her with you — she needs some air. You know, she hasn't eaten a thing?

NINA

(Shakes head disapprovingly) Maybe she wants to end up in bed, too. (To Cindy) Would you like to come?

(Cindy gets up lifelessly. She and Nina exit)

(Barbara sighs after they leave, then looks at the mess on the table. Arising, she begins to stack some of the coffee cups and other dishes. She carries one small load into the pantry where David is working on sandwiches. After she puts the dishes down, she looks at David)

BARBARA

How about some breakfast, Dave? There's some coffee, and I can make you an egg.

(David continues his work, not hearing. She tries to take over the sandwich making as a friendly gesture. David nudges her away without looking up)

Let me help you. (When she sees he will not succumb) I know you're blaming us the way we acted toward you the other night. But I want you to know how I feel.

You're the boss as far as I'm concerned. And we had no right to blame you for what happened. My fault was that I didn't stop them. But you can't be so terribly upset about that, can you?

(She gets no response) Dave — give us a break. Nina and I, we've grown up on this farm — and sometimes it's difficult to realize that no matter how much we're attached to it, that things have changed, and we're outsiders now. (Pause) Do you know what I'm trying to say?

DAVID

I'm not interested.

BARBARA

You must be — you can't forget the past, not that easily. You used to smile and joke — what's happened? (After a pause) We all used to laugh once, and have fun. (An idea) Maybe that's what we need — a party so we can just relax and be friendly. Maybe that's how we can forget some of this bitterness —

DAVID

(Turns on her bitterly) You think of parties? With your own father up there sick?

BARBARA

Please. — Don't twist what I'm trying to say.

(David makes a move to exit toward hall door leading to upstairs bedrooms)

BARBARA

(Tries to detain him by taking hold of his arm)

Dave — don't you understand, we want to be friendly?

DAVID

(Pushes her violently against wall. She is stunned)

Stay away from me!

(DISSOLVE to Sam Bailey's bedroom. He is quietly staring at the ceiling. He hears the door latch click, turns his head toward the door. David enters and slowly walks over to him. Remains standing)

DAVID

(Trying to preserve his core of hardness but his voice is gentle)

How do you feel?

(Bailey nods 'yes' as if to imply that he's all right)

(Apparently David wants to talk and try to explain so much)

(Hesitatingly) I'm sorry I talked too much last night. When I get mad I guess I shoot off my mouth too much — I don't know how to say things.

(His voice cracks. He stops talking because he would cry if he were to go on)

SAM BAILEY

(Feels the torment in David) That's all right, boy. You are part of this farm.

(David disagrees with shake of head)

(Bailey motions to chair)

Sit down. I want to tell you something, Dave. (David sits) Of my three sons, you stayed — to learn farming. I appreciate that. (Pause) When a man gets old, it's no fun working alone.

DAVID

(Ashamed) I have no trade. What else could I do?

SAM BAILEY

You'll make a good farmer. Don't be ashamed.

DAVID

I'm not. I know I got a lot to learn. And I don't mind learning from you. But it burns me up when the others tell me I'm wrong —

SAM BAILEY

You can't stop people from having opinions.

DAVID

(Under his breath) I don't have to put up with it.

SAM BAILEY

That's no answer. David, I want you to do one thing. I know how much faith you put in dates. Why don't you let today be a turning point in your life. Make it a happy date to remember.

DAVID

(Interested) How?

SAM BAILEY

Let the boys know you want to get their help.

(David cannot bear to hear this suggestion. He stands quickly, turns away)

You said you wanted to learn from me —

DAVID

Not that kind of learning. I said about the farm.

SAM BAILEY

But think — what a memorial. (David turns toward him) A living memorial of flesh and blood. Not carved out of cement but flesh and blood.

(Bailey stops. He feels that he has reached David's soft spot underneath all his hard VENEER. He stares at David wondering what he will do, how he will react to his suggestion.)

(David is confused and unhappy. How can he please the old man for whom he holds respect, and at the same time, not show his weakness)

DAVID

(Finally) I can't beg them to help me. I don't know how. Besides, they'd laugh at me. (Then) I'd better go and let you rest.

(Sam Bailey is disappointed. David sees this in his face. David is doing a lot of fast thinking. He sighs finally)

DAVID

All right. I'll try what you say, old man. But I know it won't work.

(Sam Bailey smiles. David turns and exits quickly. Then Sam Bailey grimaces as if a sharp pain tortures his body. Then, as the pain subsides, he breathes easier. For a moment he enjoys the luxury of no pain)

(DISSOLVE to shed roof. Charlie is on his hands and knees, tacking the tarpaper to the roof. Gary has a small tin can full of tar pitch into which he occasionally dips his brush and dabs at the tacks Charlie is hammering)

(Again there is a roll of thunder, now

much closer than it has been throughout this act)

GARY

(Casting a worried look upward)

Hurry up Charlie. We're in for a shower.

CHARLIE

(Also looking up at sky)

(Agreeing) Hm.

(Continues tacking)

(As Gary brushes several tack heads close to edge of roof, he glances down, sees David just starting to ascend the ladder)

(CUT to David starting his climb)

JACK JOHNSON

(OFF SCHEEN) Davel Hey Dave, hold on a second.

(David looks off toward right)

(Jack Johnson appears. He is about thirty years old. At present he is in work clothes consisting of overalls and a mechanics cap. His face is streaked with grease)

JACK JOHNSON

What's the rush, Dave?

DAVID

(Brusquely) We got work to do. What do you want?

(The good humor from Jack's face is now gone since he knows David is not going to be hospitable)

JACK JOHNSON

My uncle came down to see me last night.

(David is interested. Jack will make each word he utters sink in slowly)

He was upset. (Lights cigarette, taking his time purposely) According to him, he had a run in out here. (Looks squarely at David) I didn't believe him, Dave. He's an old man, and I think he made it up. (Pause) Especially about him being threatened.

DAVID

(Very direct, incisive) I told him he might get shot — accidentally — if he wandered around the farm.

(David starts his climb. Jack Johnson watches him. He did not like what David said. He puffs meditatively, thinking, then

turns away. His face is a picture of fury as yet under control)

(CUT to David climbing on to roof. He stands there, coldly examining the work they are doing)

GARY

(To David) How do you like the job?

(No answer. Charlie doesn't look up)

DAVID

(To both of them, gruffly) How about knocking off? I need help on the hay before it rains.

GARY

(Good-naturedly) You're the boss. Come on, Charlie.

CHARLIE

(Still tacking. To Gary) I'm almost done.

DAVID

(Very insistent) I said it's going to rain. Let the roof go.

CHARLIE

(Standing defiantly) What's the matter, Dave? Can't you do it alone?

DAVID

(Stiffly) I'm not here to argue.

CHARLIE

I bet you're not!

GARY

(Senses an impending clash. Trying to stop it before it starts)

(Appealing) Charlie —

DAVID

(Anger rising) I'm not asking favors. Those who eat have to work!

CHARLIE

(Angrily) Who do you think you're talking to? — a hired hand? I belong here as much as you do!

DAVID

Show it then.

CHARLIE

How? By breaking my back for you? (Glares defiantly) If you need me to bring in your hay, ask me, don't tell me.

(David turns to descend ladder. Then whirls around angrily)

(Threatening) Okay, Charlie! Remem-

ber that when you fill up your car with vegetables.

CHARLIE

You going to stop me?

DAVID

I think so —

CHARLIE

Then keep them. I don't need your carrots, or your tomatoes. Keep them all — you need them!

GARY

Come on, let's break it up.

CHARLIE

(To Gary) He thinks he's giving us charity!

GARY

(The pacifier) O kay, o kay.

CHARLIE

Every weekend — working like a jackass. For what?

DAVID

Don't do me any favors.

CHARLIE

I won't from now on, if that's how you feel. I don't mind doing it, but learn how to say please and thank you, little man.

(David comes forward with murder in his eyes)

DAVID

You watch what you say.

(Gary is separating them)

GARY

Come on, let's break it up.

CHARLIE

(Brandishing hammer) Let him come! I'll split his head in two.

DAVID

(Defiant. Trying to close combat)

You think so, huh?

(Thunder rolls in sky. Flash of lightning is seen)

GARY

Come on, fellers, cool off.

(To David) Look, Dave, get off the roof. We'll be down.

DAVID

I'm not sure I want you down. Not after that.

CHARLIE

That's good enough for me. If you need help get the old man out of bed to help you — like you did before.

DAVID

(A sore spot has been hit) Don't blame me for what happened —

CHARLIE

Who left the hay sitting out all night? Do it again! Kill him!

DAVID

(Shaking with anger)

(Fiercely) Get off the farm!

CHARLIE

(Drops hammer) All right!

(Charlie starts climbing down ladder)

GARY

(Still trying to be a peace maker)

Listen Dave —

DAVID

(Turns viciously on Gary) That goes for you, too! Get off the farm.

GARY

(Subdued. Gives up the fight)

O kay, boss.

(Gary climbs down ladder)

(David stands there at edge of roof shaking with rage, his fists clenched tightly. His anger could easily erupt into tears but he is holding it in check. A flash of lightning rips earthward quite close with a deafening crash. David stares up at the angry skies, as the first drops of rain hit his face)

(FADE OUT to a dark screen long enough to establish the sound of a storm in full fury. Then it diminishes to a far-away rumble again)

(FADE IN to interior of kitchen. It is late afternoon. Cindy is busily moving back and forth between table and stove. She opens the lid on pot on stove, tastes the soup, stirs it. Then goes to pantry, gets saltines, places them on serving tray which is on table. She is tight-lipped, every nerve

in her body taut. She works grimly. She now pours soup into bowl, then places it on the serving tray)

(David enters from outside. He is wearing raincoat and rainhat. We hear the thunder, but it is the receding noise of a storm come and gone. He is weary as he stops at the table and pulls off his hat)

DAVID

The rain's let up.

(Cindy ignores him)

I guess the whole field of hay's soaked.

(David takes a cracker from the tray)

CINDY

(Snatching it away) That's not your supper!

(She puts cracker back on tray and continues working covering tray with a clean towel)

DAVID

(Stunned by her abruptness) What's eating you?

(Cindy stops long enough to stare at him. She is wondering how her husband can be so calloused one minute, so naive the next. She goes back to put cover back on pot)

DAVID

Well?

(Cindy again turns to stare at him. She sees him through tear filled eyes)

CINDY

(Very deliberate) What happened this afternoon?

DAVID

(Guiltily) Nothing.

CINDY

(Pause) Why did they leave in such a hurry?

(David rises to leave the room)

CINDY

(Screaming) Don't walk out on me! I'm talking to you! What happened, Dave?

DAVID

(Stops) I told you. Nothing.

CINDY

People don't leave without a reason.

DAVID

Maybe they had one.

CINDY

(Bitterly) I see.

(Cindy picks up the tray and exits into hallway leading to upstairs bedroom)

(David sits on the chair against table. He runs his hands through his hair. He is not comfortable at all. The events of the afternoon have had a telling effect on him. He feels a million years old)

(DISSOLVE slowly to Sam Bailey's room)

(Camera DOLLIES IN slowly to Bailey as sad heavy music sneaks in and sustains itself half-heard in background. Finally the camera shows us the old man's hand half-open, frozen in death. Slowly the camera PANS to his still face which is set in a half smile. Evidently his dying has been a calm, painless experience)

(Cindy enters the room with tray)

CINDY

I have some soup, dad.

(Now she is close to him. She looks down at him)

(Quietly) Are you awake?

(Quietly but insistently) Dad —

(Then she wonders whether something is wrong. She puts the tray down on small table by bed. Comes closer to him)

(Half-frightened, half-knowing) Dad? —

(She guesses that he is dead. But it is too final a fact for her to believe. She doesn't want to. Slowly she reaches for his still hand, but one touch and she shrinks away in horror. Now she is sure. He is dead. For a moment she stands there shocked, staring. Then she turns, picks up the tray of food and exits. There is no sign of tears because the shock is too great and too sudden)

(DISSOLVE to interior kitchen. David is still sitting there when Cindy appears quietly. She puts the untouched tray on the table, turns and walks outside. David looks after her not comprehending what has

happened. He lifts the cloth covering the tray, picks up one of the crackers, takes a bite as he walks out after her)

(DISSOLVE to exterior, directly in front of the writing in the cement. Cindy is sitting on the lawn chair staring hard and dry-eyed at the writing. David comes over to her, casually munching the cracker)

DAVID

(Senses something wrong) What's the matter?

(We now see Cindy's face, her eyes glued to the writing. David's question brings Cindy out of her shock. The full impact of what has happened dawns on her. She starts crying, at first slowly, then wildly)

(FADE OUT)

ACT III

(Two months later. It is a sunny Saturday, about noon-time)

(At FADE IN we see David is standing by the bare suggested barn wall, the same of act I, scene I. He is staring out into his fields. What he sees makes him sad and dissatisfied. After a moment of staring he slowly shakes his head)

DAVID

(Mumbling to himself)

Time. A man needs time.

(He is completely wrapped up in his dreams when OFF SCREEN, from the distance of the farm house, we hear Cindy's voice calling)

CINDY

(OFF SCREEN) David. Lunch is ready.

(Pause. He hears her voice but is not responsive. Then, Cindy's voice, more insistent)

(Calling) David!

DAVID

(Turning toward the house. Mumbles to himself)

All right! I'm not deaf!

(CUT to Cindy just closing window from which she was calling him. She resumes

her work which is setting the table, checking the cooking food on stove)

(David appears in the kitchen. He is very tired looking)

CINDY

(Seeing him) Oh Dave. I didn't see you in the field.

DAVID

(Glumly) I wasn't out there. *(Sits)* You know, a man needs thirty hours a day, I guess, and three pairs of hands. *(Looks up)* Have you seen the fields lately?

CINDY

(Not stopping her work. From the tone of her answer she is obviously worried)

Yes. Sad, aren't they? Is the truck fixed?

DAVID

No. *(Then changing subject quickly)* Pinchard was telling me the government's got some kind of set-up to help farmers. I guess they bring in Puerto Ricans for the season. You pay them, of course, and —

CINDY

(Interrupting) We have worse problems, Dave.

DAVID

(As if explaining) I need help.

CINDY

(Emphatically) You need a truck. Worry about getting the truck fixed so you can run the stuff to market.

DAVID

(Angrily) All right. What more can I do? I called him at the garage, didn't I? When Jack gets good and ready he'll come. Not before. *(Pause)* I guess he didn't call, huh?

CINDY

Our phone hasn't rung in weeks.

(David looks up reproachfully)

Not since the funeral.

DAVID

(Pleading) Don't say 'funeral' like it was yesterday.

CINDY

Well, two months isn't so long.

DAVID

Long enough to stop crying.

(Takes celery stalk from table and bites into it)

What are we eating?

CINDY

You'll see in a minute.

(Continues working. Says gently) Dave, do you know what today is?

DAVID

(Nonchalantly) Saturday.

(Looks up puzzled) Isn't it?

CINDY

(Disappointed) Yes, I suppose so.

(Phone rings. Cindy stands staring at David)

DAVID

(In a quiet, low voice)

Go ahead, answer it, answer it. It's probably him.

CINDY

(Picks up receiver) Hello. . . oh, hello, Jack. . . *(Cupping mouthpiece. To David)* It's Jack. . . about the truck.

(Into speaker again) No, it doesn't run at all. . . We don't. . . No, there's no other way. We have 48 baskets of tomatoes just sitting around. . . They won't be good much longer. . .

(Then disappointed). . . Oh, I see. . . I understand. . . Sure, Jack. . . all right. . . all right. . . Bye, . . . *(Hangs up)*

DAVID

(Eagerly) Well — ?

CINDY

(Impossible to tell him) It'll be a week before he looks at the truck.

DAVID

(Exploding) A week? *(Stands)*

CINDY

Don't take it out on me. That's what he said.

DAVID

(Pacing nervously) He's doing that on purpose. And they're supposed to be neighbors. How am I going to keep those vegetables?

(Cindy shrugs) What am I anyway? Poison? What do they want from me — blood?

(Pacing furiously, blindly)

CINDY

(Calmly) I doubt that, Dave.

DAVID

What do you mean, you doubt it? I can see it, can't I? I can't even borrow a truck. And every time I mention the old man's farm they look at me like I killed him. (Cindy is staring at him) What do they think I am? I got feelings.

(David sits wearily. Runs his hand through his hair. Then he looks up quickly)

Cut-throats, that's what they are. Dirty, rotten cut-throats.

CINDY

(Deliberately disagreeing)

It's no secret you kicked his uncle off the farm. Maybe Jack's feelings are hurt.

DAVID

That makes no difference. Business is business. My money's good.

(Pause. Now more composed and quieter) Well, you can't expect no better from him — he's not even a relative. Our own people don't even know we're living any more.

CINDY

Don't blame Charlie and Gary!

DAVID

(Turns on her blindly) It's all my fault, I suppose.

(Cindy's stare implies 'isn't it?')

(David gets up, looks out window a moment)

(She continues to set the table)

You forgot to turn off the sprinkler, I see.

CINDY

I'm sorry. I'll take care of it.

DAVID

(Rising angrily) Don't bother.

(David heads for the door to go out)

CINDY

(Some of David's irritation has rubbed off on her)

All right! But I didn't forget on purpose.

(Cindy looks after the departed David. shakes her head, thinking 'what's going to become of him?' — After a moment, she wipes her hands on her apron and goes outside. In front of the house, she stands looking off aimlessly)

(We see many baskets and boxes of vegetables neatly stacked against the shed wall)

CINDY

(As old pop Johnson comes up to her slowly)

(Quietly) Hi, Mr. Johnson.

MR. JOHNSON

(Nervously looking around)

Hi. Is Dave around?

CINDY

He's out in the field. How are you?

MR. JOHNSON

No complaints.

(He has something to discuss, and his actions show this)

(Abruptly) Cindy, I come out to ask — maybe you can use help. I ain't much good on heavy work, but take tomato polishing, 'er something similar, I'd be glad to pitch in and help.

CINDY

That's nice of you.

MR. JOHNSON

(Urgently) That is, if David don't mind. You ain't havin' such an easy time. Everybody knows that.

(Hesitates) Well, shucks, neighbors are supposed to help, ain't they?

CINDY

(Pleased) Thank you. I'm sure Dave will say yes.

(He turns to go) Don't go yet. I'll give you some vegetables.

MR. JOHNSON

Are you sure — ? (Meaning what will David say)

CINDY

It's all right. (*She starts putting vegetables in a basket*) I'll put in some corn too. No sense letting them go to waste — and they will soon enough.

MR. JOHNSON

Why should they?

CINDY

Our truck has broken down.

MR. JOHNSON

Can't you get it fixed?

CINDY

We are — when your nephew comes out. He's busy this week.

(*David is seen approaching. Mr. Johnson sees him. He is now apprehensive. He wants to get away*)

MR. JOHNSON

I guess I better go.

(*In a half whisper*) Don't forget now — ask Dave what I said. And don't worry about the truck. I know why my nephew is busy — but revenge ain't for neighbors. (*Positively*) He'll be out tonight.

CINDY

I hope so.

MR. JOHNSON

He will

CINDY

Don't forget this. (*Hands basket. Mr. Johnson hesitates because David is close by*) Go ahead, it's all right. (*Mr. Johnson accepts basket and exits to right*)

(*David comes up to Cindy*)

DAVID

(*Motioning with head in Johnson's direction*) What did he want?

CINDY

Nothing. He's just trying to be neighborly.

DAVID

By begging?

CINDY

(*Snaps back*) He wasn't here begging. I gave him the basket.

DAVID

(*Sarcastically*) I guess you forgot that little phone call we just got.

CINDY

No, I didn't. But for two months I've watched you operate — things can't go on much longer using your system. There won't be any farm left.

DAVID

You bet there won't. Did you thank pop for it?

CINDY

Don't blame others, Dave. You started all this. And for your information, the truck will be fixed today or tomorrow — by Jack.

DAVID

Who're you kidding? People don't change that fast!

CINDY

They do, Dave. People are good. And your truck'll be fixed.

DAVID

You must have begged him, then.

CINDY

Dave, I didn't. But if I had to, I would. (*She heads for kitchen. David follows*)

DAVID

That's practically admitting it.

CINDY

No it isn't. But there's a lot more important things than pride. There's things like making people happy. Making them feel they belong — and loving them.

(*They are in kitchen now. She is scurrying around finishing last minute table preparations. David is listening, interestedly*)

Like remembering little things.

DAVID

Such as?

CINDY

(*Turning on him*) You're so good on dates. What is today?

(*David doesn't know. She continues through her tears*)

It happens to be our anniversary! You should have remembered because this is

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the last one. Next year we'll be on relief. There won't be a farm. There won't be anything left but memories! — of tomatoes rotting with blight because there wasn't time to spray them, and hay in the fields turning to straw because it stayed there too long.

(She is crying as she stands there.)

DAVID

(Affected) (Comes to her half gently)
Cindy —

CINDY

Leave me alone. *(Turns away)* My own sisters can't come out anymore. *(Turns to him)* You know what we've got left, Dave? A cement walk out there that'll last and last and last to remind us. That's all we've got — a bunch of dates on a tombstone.

(She sits down)

DAVID

(Trying to make up) Cindy —

(Cindy pulls away from David's touch)

DAVID

Don't say things like that. I'm not keeping you from your sisters. If you want to, call them up. Go ahead, call them up.

(Cindy looks at him — does he think it is that simple?)

I won't shoot you. Call them up.

CINDY

That's your job.

DAVID

(Sharply) No! They'll get no chance to laugh at me. They're your sisters. You talk to them. But understand one thing — I can't run this farm and remember all the nice little things I'm supposed to. *(Pause)* I'm sorry about the anniversary. I'll make it up to you somehow — just give me a chance.

(There is no change in Cindy's attitude)

Have you any idea what I've gone through this summer? Well, it hasn't been fun I can tell you —

CINDY

(Unsympathetically) What do you want from me?

DAVID

(Trying for reconciliation) Just understanding, that's all. Give me a chance.

(She is not impressed)

I'll tell you what — suppose I start by getting rid of that sidewalk?

CINDY

Don't bother.

DAVID

Maybe if we didn't see it always staring us in the face —

CINDY

You're just trying to clear your own conscience —

DAVID

(Hurt) Don't say that.

CINDY

Then leave it alone. I like that sidewalk.

DAVID

(Quietly but belligerently) Why?

(Cindy's silence is maddening to David)

So I won't forget? So I'll be punished like a little boy?

(He grabs her shoulders)

DAVID

Suppose I do it anyway? Suppose I smash that sidewalk into little bits?

(David expects an answer but gets none)

(Shouts) Cindy! Have you gone deaf and dumb? Say something.

(Cindy tries to pull away)

(Shouts) Answer me! !

(Cindy pulls away — slaps his face fiercely. David is stunned. Then he starts out of the house)

CINDY

(Alarmed. This is something she hadn't planned. Runs to him, holds him)

Dave! Don't go! Please!

(David stares at her for a second without hearing. He is hurt by her actions. He pulls away and exits)

(Cindy returns defeated to the table. She sits slowly, staring into space. Her whole life seems one big unescapable trap. She feels so helpless)

(FADE OUT)

(While the screen is darkened, perhaps the dishes from the table can be removed. to help further, perhaps we can fade in on a close up of Cindy)

(FADE IN Cindy is lying on couch in the kitchen, asleep. Evidently a few hours have passed. Outside, it is beginning to darken. David comes in from the outside. When he sees her asleep, he stops a moment and looks at her. His face betrays no emotion. He goes to hallway that leads to upstairs bedrooms. Directly behind the door are coats and sweaters hanging on hooks. He brings back one of his old top coats and covers Cindy without too much fuss. After this, he exits into hallway, this time heading for his room)

(A second later we hear sound of car stopping outside. Then the kitchen door opens and we see Barbara standing there. Directly behind her is her husband Charlie, his arms laden with two large gift boxes gaily done up. Barbara looks around, then motions for Charlie to come in)

(Barbara goes to Cindy, bends down and kisses her on her cheek. Slowly Cindy opens her eyes. She looks up at Barbara, but she has that puzzled look as if the whole thing were a dream)

BARBARA

(Softly) Happy anniversary, sis.

(Cindy gets up quickly, and they fall into each other's arms. Cindy starts crying)

CINDY

(Through tears) I was afraid you'd never come.

CHARLIE

(Has put packages down) Hi, Cindy.
(Cindy kisses him on the cheek)

CINDY

I'm so glad you came, Charlie.

CHARLIE

How's Dave?

CINDY

All right.

(Hall door opens. David appears in doorway. When he sees who is here he stops.

For a second all are frozen where they are. What will David's reactions be?)

BARBARA

(To Charlie) Go ahead.

(She motions toward David with her head. Charlie immediately advances, his right hand out in a gesture of friendship, but David does not accept)

(Well-versed in what he will say) Dave let's bury the hatchet, what do you say? We've all had a couple of months to think. Is this what Sam wanted? I say 'no.' What do you say, Dave?

(David accepts the outstretched hand and manages a weak smile)

Happy anniversary.

DAVID

(Weakly) Thanks, Charlie.

(David is fighting hard to keep the tears back)

Thanks.

(David rushes from the room, through the door that would lead to upstairs bedroom. Cindy is worried as she looks off in the direction David has gone)

BARBARA

(Gently) Go ahead. Go to him.

(As Cindy starts to leave, sound of another car stopping outside. She stops. Barbara motions for Cindy to go on upstairs)

It's only Nina and Gary. You can see them in a few minutes.

(Cindy kisses Barbara, then Charlie on the cheek. Then she rushes off toward David's room. At the door of the kitchen, she stops and smiles.

CINDY

Thank you for everything (This is directed to Charlie and Barbara)

(Exit Cindy)

(DISSOLVE to David's room. He is seated at edge of bed, staring blindly at the floor. He seems puzzled at the recent happenings. All the anger is drained from him: There is nothing left now but to try and rebuild on a new foundation. The dark threatening future has suddenly cracked

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— The ones whom he persecuted have come with a hopeful light. He is no longer alone back to him. These are the thoughts that flash within him)

(Cindy opens the door and walks in. When David looks up at her she knows that he is alone only because he must have time to reorganize his thoughts)

CINDY

(Tenderly in a whisper) David —

(She rushes to him. They are in each other's arms. Only then does David start sobbing his heart out. Cindy looks over his

shoulders with a contented look — she is looking beyond him, beyond the room, hopefully. She knows everything will be all right.)

(We leave them there in each other's arms, as we slowly follow the view to the window; Then, from the window we look down on the cement walk and the writing)

(DISSOLVE slowly to close up of the cement walk and the writing.)

(FADE OUT)



ARMENIAN LIFE ABROAD

A digest of recent happenings among the Armenian settlements in diaspora.

THE WORLD WIDE EFFORT IN SUPPORT OF THE BEIRUT ARMENIAN PALANJIAN JEMARAN AND ITS SPONSORING HAMAZGAYIN ORGANIZATION

The one effort currently commanding the attention of thinking Armenians worldwide is the present drive being pushed internationally to support further expansion of the cultural and educational work of the renowned Beirut Armenian Palanjan Jemaran, and its sponsoring organization, Hamazgayin, at the moment of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of both the college and "Hamazgayin".

The Beirut Palanjan Jemaran, in its twenty-five years of existence, has written a record of important achievement, as has its "Hamazgayin", through whose direct help the College has been able to operate through the years.

Armenians everywhere are flocking to the banners of education, and are responding generously to the call issued by the Hamazgayin for further financial aid.

In the United States, the Armenian American communities have organized themselves to raise about \$100,000 for the noble cause, and at this writing, returns being received at Campaign headquarters in Boston indicate that Armenian Americans will once again manifest their affection for Armenian learning by contributing generously to a cause close to the hearts of people of Armenian parentage wherever they might be.

At this writing, community functions in favor of the Jemaran and Hamazgayin have been held in such places as Franklin

(Mass.), Lynn (Mass.), Richmond (Va.), Haverhill (Mass.), Pontiac (Mich.), Mexico City (Me.), Syracuse (N. Y.), Hartford (Conn.), and Los Angeles (Calif.), with the returns from these cities indicating the enthusiasm of the Armenian American community for the effort. A number of individual donations have also been announced to date. These range from one-thousand dollars down to more modest figures.

American headquarters for the Campaign are confident that the continuing drive will burgeon out into a spontaneous tribute to the activities of one of the world's outstanding Armenian institutions of learning, the Beirut Jemaran, and the "Hamazgayin".

Sympathetic Armenian American newspapers have been giving complete coverage to the Campaign effort in the United States and abroad. In America, the effort for the Jemaran has been spearheaded by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, the Armenian Relief Society, the Armenian Youth Federation, the Central Trustee Board of the Armenian Holy National Apostolic Church, and well-wishing compatriotic organizations.

This is not the first occasion where the Armenian American community has been marshalled to aid the Jemaran. Some years ago, it will be recalled, the late Levon Chanth, with the late Nicol Aghbalian, co-founder of the college, and well-known Ar-

menian author and educator, in the twilight of his life, visited the United States on a mission connected with financial support of the Jemaran. At that time, Mr. Chanth helped raise \$127,000 for the college. In addition, the Armenian Relief Society, the world's largest Armenian women's charitable organization, has been annually remitting large sums as student-aid, and the comparatively recently organized Armenian Educational Foundation, in Los Angeles, has yearly since its foundation donated important monies to the Jemaran.

The Beirut Jemaran, when founded

twenty-five years ago, was forced to operate on "shoe-string" finances. The demand for added educational facilities, however, and the strong determination and faith of the founding fathers, resulted soon in moves to expand physically the college. Aided immeasurably by a large grant donated the school through the will of the late Mr. Nishan Palanjian, of Egypt, as executed by the benefactor's sisters, the college was able to activate its plans towards enlargement. Today, the Jemaran boasts its own campus property. The present drive is designed to place the educational institution on an endowed, self-supporting plane.



CLASSIC BOOKS IN SERIAL FORM

GEVORG MARZPETOUNI

A Historical Novel

By MOURATZAN

Translated from the Armenian

THE STORY THUS FAR

The time is the first quarter of the 10th century when Armenia is in conflict with the Arab invader. Ashot the Iron, the Armenian King, has alienated two of his most powerful princes, Prince Sevada, the father of Queen Sahakanoush, and Prince Tzlik Amram, the Governor of Outik. The cause of the rift is Princess Aspram, the wife of Tzlik Amram, an old flame of the King with whom he is hopelessly in love. To add to the King's troubles, his princes have deserted him, seeking shelter in the security of their castles, while the country is open to the ravages of the invading Arab army. Prince Gevorg Marzpetouni, a veteran soldier and a devoted patriot, takes it upon himself to reconcile the princes with the King with a view to present a common front to the enemy and, thus, to save the country, but all his efforts prove in vain. The King has retired to the monastery on a little island on Lake Sevan. At this time the King's only two friends are the Queen and Prince Marzpetouni. In his desperation, Prince Marzpetouni decides to take the field against the Arab with only twenty of his valiant and loyal followers, and to this end he proceeds to Sevan where he obtains the King's benediction in his hazardous venture. The prince's force soon falls on an Arab force encamped before the Fortress of Kel and puts the enemy to flight. Led by the King himself, an Armenian force subsequently defeats the Arabs again at Sevan. But the King is wounded. The King's force goes on to the ancient city of Bakaran where Marzpetouni conceives a bold idea to rid all of Armenia of the Arab invaders. The plan, however, is revealed unwittingly by the Catholicos. The king is visited by his brother Abbas at the royal sanctuary at Sevan, and Abbas and Marzpetouni prevail on the ailing monarch to return to his capital of Yerazgavors. Catholicos Hovhannes passes away, and Marzpetouni visits King Gagik, cementing relations between the two Armenian Kings.

CHAPTER V

The End of Old Grievs

Despite the fact that the snow already had blanketed the mountains of Gougarq and closed all the roads, there was feverish activity in the Castle of Tavoush, preparatory to a distant journey. An army of servants were busy assembling the portable objects, packing them, and stacking provisions. Loyal villagers were scurrying inside the castle's courtyard, driving herds of pack animals. Some of them were carrying loads, other were returning after the unloading, considering how strong and durable were the pack animals. This labor was being supervised by menfolk and in the entire castle there was not a single woman. Even the moving of clothing which was the work of handmaidens, was being done by man servants. It seemed some blasting whip had driven away from the Castle all the creatures who bore the name of woman.

In one of the upper storey salons of the multitowered castle where a huge fire was burning at the fireplace, the *Sepouh Tzlik Amram* was pacing the floor. His face was sad, his brow wrinkled, he was gazing at the fire. His luxuriant beard which reached to his waist was rippling in white waves, in perfect contrast to his attire which was completely black. He no longer wore a silver belt nor carried his golden sheathed sword. The only ornament which he held in his hand was a black rosary whose beads he kept pulling as he paced the floor in slow steps.

Suddenly he stopped in front of the narrow window with multifold colorful glass and started to gaze at the glen of Tavoush along the slopes of which a small band of mounted troops were galloping upwards. He strained his vision and yet he could not recognize the leader who did not look like an ordinary man, but he surmised

from the uniforms of the riders that they were coming from Vostan.

When the horsemen reached the castle gate he instantly recognized Prince Marzpetouni, and stepping out to the stone balcony, he ordered the gates to be opened.

"I wonder why he has come here, what has he got to do with me?" he thought to himself, and finding no answer he stepped inside the salon.

As he dismounted, Prince Gevorg noticed the bustle inside the courtyard and murmured to himself: "We are late; he already is leaving."

As he ascended the upper storeys of the castle the Prince noticed that the place was completely stripped — the rugs and the ornaments were piled up, the sofas had been dismantled, the candelabras had been unchained — in short, the castle was completely stripped of its decorations.

"Why so soon, in this winter?" the Prince wondered, and still he was without the answer.

When he entered the salon, the *Sepouh* was seated in front of the fire, fingering the beads of his rosary.

"What brings you here, Prince Marzpetouni?" the *Sepouh* forced a smile as he rose to meet his guest. The smile, however, could not conceal the sadness on his face.

"As you see, Lord *Sepouh*, I am here. I have come to your castle as your guest, but it seems you have purposely stripped it of its splendor."

"God stripped it, dear Prince. He stripped the most precious ornament of my castle," said the *Sepouh* in a shaking voice as he grasped the Prince's hand and led him to the fireside. "Sit down and warm yourself. You must be cold. The plain of Tavoush is full of bleak winds," he continued,

stirring the fire with a pair of iron tongs the while.

"You are quite right. Your mountains pinched us a bit; our goatskins scarcely kept us from freezing."

"How come, you remembered me in this cold winter, Lord Marzpetouni?" the Sepouh asked with apparent impatience.

"And how come you are leaving your land in the thick of the winter?" the Prince retorted with a mild smile.

"I have delivered my land to the King of Apkhaz, receiving in return the banks of Djorokh. I am going to take possession of my new estate," the Sepouh replied unabashed.

"I knew that. But why in the cold of the winter?"

"To stay here one day longer is death for me. The chambers of this castle are haunted now by infernal monsters who give me no rest day and night. I am running away from them."

"Infernal monsters? What do you mean?" Marzpetouni asked bewildered.

"Yes, monsters! Have you ever met them? Have you ever seen them?"

"Me? No." It seemed to the Prince that the Sepouh had gone mad."

"You are a lucky man then. Whom the monsters do not torment he is a lucky man, yes indeed. There was a time when I, too, was a lucky man, but my fate destroyed your King."

"Lord Sepouh!"

"Ah yes. What's that scoundrel doing now? He still lives, is it not so? He stages parties in his court, he is thinking about recapturing his capital, and never remembers his crimes."

"Lord Sepouh, I am hungry, first order some food for me," the Prince interrupted purposely, trying to forestall the Sepouh's anger.

The latter was silent for a moment, then turning to the Prince, he said, "Forgive me, Lord Marzpetouni. I was excited. I should

not have behaved like this, yes I know. But what shall I say? I am a sick man, my heart and soul are covered with wounds. Wisdom no longer guides my actions." Saying it, he clapped his hands and the guard came in.

"Tell them to fetch dinner for us," the Sepouh ordered.

Immediately, the servants brought in water. The princes washed and then partook of the dinner which consisted of some delicious morsels.

After the dinner the Sepouh entertained his guest with innocent conversation in order not to excite himself, and thus, to spoil the Prince's disposition.

The next morning the Sepouh asked Marzpetouni the object of his mission since he did not expect to stay in Tavoush much longer.

"We got news in Vostan that you have joined the princes of Gougarg and Taik," the Prince began, "and have agreed to surrender the provinces of Gougarg, Taik and Out to the King of Abkhazians. The news made a bad impression on the Court, as to myself, I was verily horrified. I have come to foil that treacherous act."

"You are too late," the Sepouh observed frostily.

"How come I am too late?"

"Just so. We already have completed the transaction."

"How?"

"We have signed a treaty with King Ber, delivering to him the abovementioned provinces, and in return we have received various estates in Abkhazistan."

"By what right have you done this thing?"

"By the same right which has been granted us by the King of Armenia."

"He merely appointed you as overseers of those provinces."

"But later we rebelled against him, took possession of the provinces and the Lord King was unable to seize it from us."

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your inheritance; you seized them by treachery."

"I don't deny that we seized them. If it were not for Tzlik Amram, Gougraq and Taik would not have been separated from the King of Armenia. I myself caused this separation. You know the story, and you know the reason which made me do it."

"I know that. But haven't you already had your revenge? You deprived the King of his possessions, you forced him to take flight, to go into hiding in Sevan for long months, finally to be caught in a fight with the Beshir in which he was mortally wounded — a wound which will take him to his grave. What more do you want of him? Why do you want to requite a single wrong a hundred fold? And lastly, what is the sin of the poor people of those provinces? Why are you turning them over to the foreign beast?"

"Lord Marzpetouni, you speak as if I were the guilty party. But when I remember the past and examine the present, what I have done seem trivial to me. King Ashot wronged me grievously and caused me irreparable loss. He took away from me my matchless treasure. It seemed my revenge would never be satisfied. I did relax somewhat after my revolt, my occupation of Outik, and his flight to Sevan, and I was just beginning to become reconciled with my misfortunes. I tried to obliterate the memory of my foe from my mind and, indeed, I had forgotten him. But what shall I say? I can't recall it without horror. . ."

"Did something else come up, Lord Sepouh?"

"Oh, if I only could stop talking about it!"

"Tell me, what else happened?"

"Nothing else, nothing happened."

In uttering the last words the Sepouh paled, he averted from Marzpetouni his gaze which at the moment was like a burning furnace.

"Tell me what happened, I beseech you," the Prince importuned.

"What happened? Well, the heavens collapsed upon me, that's what happened. The heavens, do you understand? But no, you can't understand it. Hell with all its terrors fell upon me, to torture a wretch like me, to torment my heart and soul."

"Believe me, Lord Sepouh, I don't get you," the Prince said respectfully.

"I will speak more plainly. I will be tormented a few minutes longer as I repeat the terrible story." The Sepouh straightened himself in his seat, pulled at the beads of his rosary, and then continued:

"When I first learned the unbelievable secret an infernal madness seized me, I ordered my poor wife to be chained and thrown in a dark dungeon of the castle. O, why has God endowed the beasts only with devouring jaws? Does not man surpass the beast in his ferocity and cruelty? Yes, I had her confined in a dungeon, I forbade all communication with her, I made her live on a bare daily ration of food and water, to meditate and to suffer for her sin.

"Then I left Tavoush and started the rebellion, the beginning and the end of which is well known to you. When I returned to Tavoush I ordered the release of my poor wife. She stood there before me in her chains, trembling. O why did I not go blind in both eyes at that moment? How did I watch her misery and still remained stubborn? Her onetime lovely body had wasted away, her bright face had paled and the spark in her flaming eyes was gone, extinguished. She looked at me, wanted to speak, but I stopped her. Why did not the hand of God smite me down at that moment? Perchance she wanted to protest against my injustice, perchance she wanted to justify herself or to adduce new evidence which would prove her innocence. But I was cruel to her, I refused her this one chance. I glared at her with beastly eyes and reminded her of the shameful

defeat and cowardly flight of her lover, the King.

"After that the only favor I did to her was to release her of her chains and to confine her in one of the upper storeys of the castle."

At the last words Amram sighed deeply and buried his head in his hands. It seemed he could not go on. The Prince asked him to say no more if some insupportable grief prevented him from speaking.

"On the contrary, my grief forces me to speak," the Sepouh continued, raising his head. "How long have I gone without speaking! How long these halls have echoed the sound of my mournful sighings, have witnessed my bitter tears! Oh, this is too, too insupportable, and yet this is the fate which has been allotted to poor mortals like us. But it seems to me these griefs would soften, would cease to persecute us so cruelly if those who surround us, the people who bear the image of our souls would examine our hearts a moment and see the anguish which resides there. Tell me now, Lord Marzpetouni, what would you have done if you had been in my place?"

"For instance?"

"For instance, if you suddenly learned that the person you loved most had betrayed you?"

"I count no man perfect. Each of us has his faults, and therefore, I would be tolerant toward all who have sinned against me."

"But are there no sins which are unpardonable, sins for which men would hang the sinner from a pillar, would burn him at the stake, would drown him in water?"

"Of course there are."

"And what is that, Prince? I want to hear it."

"Treason against the fatherland."

"Only that?"

"Yes, only that. That's the only crime which is unpardonable."

"But when your beloved betrays you? But what am I saying? How could you understand me? That's why I said our anguish would soften if only fellow creatures could comprehend its nature and extent."

"Go on, Lord Sepouh. I can understand."

"Can you? Tell me then, what would you do if you suddenly learned — forgive my presumption — that your wife, Princess Kohar, had betrayed you? Do not pass judgement with your present heart; go back to the past, become young again, remember the old fire which used to inflame your heart."

"I don't know. I have never experienced such a grief."

"Oh how happy you must be! That's the reason why the Lord of Marzpetounis has worked for his home, the glory of his fatherland, and has won such renown with such a clear conscience and such a tranquil heart. But I, Tzlik Amram, whose heart beat no less for the fatherland, has become a traitor. Indeed, if you could comprehend the extent of my grief for a moment, you would then understand why I locked her up in the tower, her, my Aspram whom I loved as no ten hearts put together could love. Yes, I locked her up in the tower, but if you knew how much I suffered seeing her deprived of the sunshine, and left her alone in her misery. How many times I wanted to go to her, to enter her solitaire, open my arms and press her to myself, and tell her I forgive her! And yet, why should I hide my sin? The thought that she was more happy in her suffering than the idea of returning to my arms always stopped me."

"Thus, months passed. My inner pride prevented me from going to her and speaking out what my heart long since had spoken. I sank deeper and deeper in my self-pity. There were moments when my anguish was so heavy that it would stifle me, and I stifled my emotions and silently wept."

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"Once, by sheer accident, I saw the maiden returning from the tower, carrying the food which had been untouched. To my inquiry, she told me that the Lady had ordered her not to bring food to her anymore. This strange request made me suspicious. Could it be she wanted to starve to death? I wondered and my conscience hurt me. Again I was beset by my old thoughts. Again I decided to go to her, free her from the tower and return her to her former status of Ladyship. Tormented by conflicting thoughts, I remained there in my room for long hours. Finally the sexton's Halleluiahs and the knolling of the church bells aroused me of my stupor. I sprang to my feet. 'I am late,' I said to myself, 'I must hurry and save that poor woman.' Oh, what a moment that was! Why did not a lightning strike me down then?"

"Why, what happened?" the Prince asked alarmed.

"What happened? This is what happened. I hurried to the tower, ordered the guard to open the iron door, stepped inside the cell, and what should I see? My God! My wife, my beloved Aspram was hanging from the ceiling. Her frail body was dangling in the air. I was horrified by the sight, it seemed the heavens collapsed on my head and the terrors of hell engulfed me. The minute I saw the horrible image I roared like a wounded lion. The echo of my roar shook the rafters of the castle and the occupants became bewildered. I grabbed her body and pressed it to myself, then, like a madman, I ran away from the tower. For a moment I thought she still was alive, that she would open her bright eyes and would whisper into my ear. But, Alas! It was all an illusion. Aspram was dead forever, her lovely face had turned blue, her beautiful eyes, her lips were closed, and her heart had stopped beating. I saw and felt it, then I embraced the dead body and started to bewail her death.

"I don't know what happened to me after

that. For several days I was out of my wits. At the last moment, when they were lowering the casket into the grave, my heart burst again and again I started to bemoan my loss."

The Sepouh drew a deep sigh, hung his head, and relapsed into silence. The Prince who comprehended the depth of his anguish tried to comfort him, but his words had the opposite effect on Amram.

"Do not try to commiserate with me, Lord Marzpetouni," he exclaimed apparently disturbed. "You cannot comfort the man who has lost a treasure which is more precious than life, whose spirit is dead, whose heart is cold, and who lives only to suffer. Do you want to comfort me? Then show me how I can revenge myself upon my enemy and your King. Yes, only cold, inexorable, deathly revenge can comfort me now. My heart will be refreshed, my soul thrilled, once I see Ashot being tormented in the hell which I shall prepare for him. I guess you said he is a dying man. God forbid! I do not want him to die. Do you think eternity can provide him tortures such as I want? No. Let him live until Tzlik Amram prepares his hell."

"You are too excited, Lord Sepouh. However, will you permit me to ask a question? A while ago you said that, after the King's flight, your revenge had been satisfied. What is the cause of your new inflammation against him?"

"I said I had become reconciled with my misfortune, but remember, my wife hanged herself after that."

"Was that the reason why you surrendered our ancestral provinces to King Ber?"

"Exactly. I could no longer live in Tavoush; that castle had turned into a hell for me, its halls are filled with monsters, each nook and corner of that castle reminds me of my Aspram. That's the reason why I am running away from here."

"Lord Sepouh, you could easily have moved from Tavoush. Was there any need

of delivering your province to King Ber?"

"I did it in order to prevent Ashot from taking possession of it."

"And do you think Ber will be able to inherit this land?"

"If he fails, at least he will make war against Ashot, will disturb his peace, will ruin his land. That's the most important thing for me."

Seeing that passion alone was speaking through the Sepouh and that his counsel would avail nothing, the Prince regretted his coming to Tavoush and asked no more questions.

Two days later the Sepouh gathered his belongings and moved from Tavoush, leaving his estates to the King of Abkhazians, whose loyal servants already had arrived to take possession. Prince Marzpetouni, likewise, took his leave, but, instead of proceeding to Vostan, he headed for the princes of Gougarq and Taik in the hope of persuading them to revoke their promise to King Ber.

Before leaving Tavoush, however, he wrote a letter to the King explaining to him the cause of the Sepouh's new treachery. Furthermore, he described the causes of the Sepouh's grievance, even justifying him, and argued that not all men possessed the virtue of subordinating personal interests to the common good, that the Sepouh, before being an Armenian patriot, essentially was a human being, made of flesh and blood, and consequently, he could not bear the unconscionable wrong which he had received from his friend.

Still under the influence of the Sepouh's words and his sad departure, the Prince wrote his letter in such a style which in reality was a direct condemnation of the King. He did not foresee that his writing would effect the King's health which, without it, already had been afflicted by too many blows of fate. Some two days later when the messenger already had arrived at Shirak, he reflected upon that letter and

regretted it. However, it was too late now.

In his letter the Marzpetouni has asked the King immediately to send Sepouh Vahram at the head of a few strong regiments to the region of Outik, to occupy the provinces of Outik, the Gougarq and the Taik before the arrival of the Apkhazians. Some ten days later Sepouh Vahram, without awaiting Marzpetouni's instructions, seized the fortifications of Outik and cleared the region of all followers of the King of Abkhazians. The native population being opposed to foreign rule supported the royal troops everywhere, thus facilitating the Sepouh's operations. Sepouh Vahram had the same success in Gougarq. Then, turning to the south, he entered the land of Taik where he met Prince Marzpetouni. The latter informed him that the fortifications of Taik which were closed to Abkhazia, already had been occupied by Abkhaz troops.

But since winter was approaching and the occupation of Taik presented an extensive campaign, it was deemed necessary to bring fresh troops from Vostan. Accordingly, it was decided to camp the army near Phanaskerd, in a plain of the same name which was the junction of Gougarq and Taik, and wait there until spring.

In the meanwhile the Prince did not remain idle. He started secret negotiations with the secondary princes in an effort to win their friendship. And since the latter still were loyal to the throne they gladly accepted all his propositions concerning the forthcoming campaign against the Abkhazians.

With the arrival of spring when the snow melted and the roads were clear, Prince Marzpetouni marched his army first of all against Panaskerd. The commander of the fort, in accordance with a previous agreement, surrendered his fort and the town to the Prince. The latter reinstated the Commander in his post and after replenishing his force with a company of guards

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proceeded with his army toward Outik. And since an encounter with the enemy here was inevitable, the Prince sent word to the King to hasten some reinforcements by way of Araratian Basen, planning to join them at the source of the Jorokh River.

While the messenger was on his way a new messenger arrived from Vostan, bringing a letter from Grand Prince Abbas announcing the critical condition of the King and asking him to hurry to Vostan at once.

The Prince paled reading the letter. "Some evil genius is persecuting us," he said to his fellow warrior the Sepouh. "You stay here with your regiments and guard the border while I proceed to Vostan."

"You go ahead," the Sepouh replied assuringly. "I will fall back on Panaskerd to insure the army against any surprise attack. If you need my help send me a messenger and I will hurry at once to Shirak."

When Marzpetouni arrived at Yerazgavors the King was dying but all the same he was glad at the arrival of his loyal prince.

"My only wish was to see you for the last time," the King said, extending his shaking hand to the Prince. "Come closer, my Prince, and tell me that you forgive me."

"For what crime of yours, my Lord?" Deeply moved the Prince knelt down and kissed the King's hand.

"My crimes are many, I cannot recount them all. This much I will tell you that I am the cause of all your troubles. Forgive me. Forgive your King."

"My Lord King, we are fighting against external evils. They come from far off."

"I am the cause of those evils too. The letter you sent me from Tavoush was a truthful sermon. I thank you for it. It opened the doors of freedom to me. If you knew how happy I am to be rid at last of my sufferings."

The Prince understood the hint, and although he was convinced that the King

was happy to die, he nevertheless was deeply grieved that his letter had accelerated the crisis.

"It is you who should forgive me, Sire," the Prince said sorrowfully. "I jeopardized your health by my indiscretion."

"Not at all. That single step which you call 'indiscreet' is the crowning glory of all your services to the Throne. Ashot the Iron is the Jonah of the Armenians and it is because of him that the Armenian sea has become stormy. Marzpetouni's efforts cannot pacify the storm as long as the Jonah is on the ship of salvation. Throw me into the sea and the ship and the crew will be saved."

The King fell silent for a moment, then opening his eyes he looked around. Standing over his head he saw the Queen and his brother Abbas.

"Behold I go away," he said in a faint voice. "Soon I shall be lost in the infinity of the sea. Before you is life, with its evils and its attractions. Try to enjoy it wisely, not as I have done, uselessly. My beloved brother Abbas, to you I leave the Fatherland, loaded with her pains and afflictions. Inherit the former, and take good care of the latter. You were lucky in your family life; you will be lucky in your kingdom, for he who is a good father to his children will be a good father to his subjects."

"And to you my hapless Queen, I leave you grief, mourning, and bitter memories. I would have wished that you would forget me, that you would never remember my name and my deeds, but alas, that is impossible for you. At least do not curse me, do not curse your poor husband and king, for I shall be tortured in hell twice as much, should your curse reach the eternal throne."

Two days later the king passed away. The King's physician confirmed that he died of his old wound. And that was what the people believed. But at the court the people insisted that the suicide of Princess Aspram hastened his end. The

poor King had been unable to stand the pangs of his conscience. The spirit of the dead victim and the tears of the living

Queen persecuted him, and he decided to die. But no one knew for sure what angel brought him his death.

CHAPTER VI

The Old Foe and the New King

The news of the King's death swiftly spread throughout the land whereupon the Armenian princes with their contingents, the Armenian Catholicos, and the civil and religious dignitaries of the land hastened to Yerazgavors to attend the funeral. In a stately ceremony befitting a king, the body was moved from Yerazgavors and taken to Bakaran, the traditional mausoleum of the Bagratounis, and was finally put to rest at the Holy Cathedral, the resting place of his martyred father Sembat and his martyred brother Moushegh.

The King's death was bitterly mourned by the Queen, his brother Abbas and the rest of the royal family. Prince Marzpetouni who had been his childhood companion was most disconsolate of all. A playmate of childhood days, fellow trainees in arms when they were mere lads, aide de camp in his youth, and after his accession to the throne his trusted friend and fellow-warrior, the Prince had been deeply attached to his King. For long years he had been the right hand man of Ashot, had fought side by side with him, had won and lost with him, had shared in his joys and sorrows, had laughed and wept with him. At that moment he was recalling the entire eventful past — Ashot the Iron's troublesome and stormy reign. He was recalling the days when he was enraptured by the young King's heroic exploits, the roar of his voice on the battle field, his daring and impetuous assaults on the enemy and the blows of his sword against his foes. How he had rejoiced in his heart

when he first realized that God had called the King to be the savior of the Fatherland, to wipe off the foreigner's insult and to restore the former glory of the ancestral throne.

But, Alas! a weakness in his make-up had vitiated his greatness — the gnawing worm of passion had overthrown the mighty oak, this magnificent handiwork. And now, finished, he lay under the cold earth, his heart no longer sensitive, inaccessible to love or tears. And yet he had taken with him great hopes and expectations — a vast country, a populous family whose members numbered in millions, deprived of countless blessings just because of him, left in insecurity and a grave crisis, menaced by enemies and ambitious relatives. All this would have been different if the only man to whom the fate of the Fatherland had been committed had been unlike other mortals, if he had not succumbed to his passion, or if he had sacrificed that passion to a far more sacred sentiment — the love of the Fatherland.

But while Prince Marzpetouni was being tormented by these thoughts another man was wholly engrossed with different sentiments. The King's end had put into his mind entirely different ideas. The earth which covered the King's body would, he thought, bring forth a new life and new glories for himself. That man was Ashot the Tyrant who still aspired to be king of Armenia. Seeing the vast concourse at Bakaran attending the King's funeral, he thought first this was the opportunity to

show his generosity to the army and the people, and secondly, as soon as the mourning days were over, to raise the question of the succession since the conditions favored his cause as long as the army was away from the capital and the princes were in Bakaran. Thus, he could seize without difficulty the Court and its treasures and arrest Abbas and his princes.

With this aim in view for several days he generously entertained not only the royal and princely families but the royal troops and the vast multitude which had thronged in Bakaran from near and far. Besides, he distributed large sums in alms for the needy, ostensibly for the salvation of the deceased King's soul. All this made a profound impression on the public in regard to the "Tyrant" and even a few of the princes looked upon him with great admiration for his generosity.

Encouraged by his initial success, the "Tyrant" now set himself to his primary objective. First, he sent messengers to the Nassir advising him of his intention and asking his aid in case of need. The latter who was looking for just such an excuse to take his old revenge joyfully accepted the "Tyrant's" proposition.

Next, the "Tyrant" ordered his troops at Yeraskhadzor slowly to advance toward Yeraskhavors, without giving rise to any suspicion. The arrest of Abbas and his loyal followers was the next step in his scheme. And to insure the loyalty of the army after this treachery, he commissioned his agents to bribe the leaders of the army.

After having made these dispositions he broached the neutral princes to obtain their opinion in regard to the future king. He hoped to discover malcontents among them who would gladly join his cause but in this he was greatly disappointed because the princes to a man pointed to Abbas as the successor.

"He is the only legal successor and the people look to him as their next king," they

told him. It was their fond wish to see the Prince of Princes on his brother's throne as soon as possible. Even the Catholicos urged the princes to hasten the coronation of Abbas before the enemies took a hand in the matter.

The "Tyrant" naturally was displeased by all this but he concealed his feelings until the greater part of the princes had left Bakaran. When the customary days of mourning were over, all that were left in Bakaran were the Queen and her attendants, Prince Abbas with his retinue, David, the Lord of Quardman, Prince Marzpetouni and his son Kor. The latter, however, was outside the city, commanding the troops encamped near Akhourian.

As to Prince Marzpetouni, he was impatient for the waiting. There was so much to be done and he eagerly awaited the day when Abbas, having completed the allotted days of mourning, would return to Yerazgavors and prepare for the succession. Like the Catholicos, he thought it imperative to crown the new king before enemies and traitors had time to rally partisans and disturb the peace of the land. To this end, he naturally had consulted with the loyal princes and insured their cooperation.

But how great was his surprise and apprehension when Prince Sembat of the Siunis sent him word that, after leaving Bakaran, he had met a few regiments of Ashot the Tyrant, advancing from Yeraskhadzor to Yeraskhavors. Prince Sembat had seen a sinister motive in this move and advised Marzpetouni to take precautionary measures.

The Prince received the news while he was with the army and still was hesitating when his loyal servant Yeznik brought him other alarming news. For some days they had been distributing free provisions to the army from the storehouse in Bakaran, saying, every Armenian soldier in Bakaran can freely benefit from the store-

house of the Strategos (The Tyrant). Besides, everyone was singing the praises of the Strategos for his generosity, and boasting that his sergeants were richer than our captains.

The Prince was furious with rage hearing all this. He instantly summoned Prince Kor and explained to him the entire situation.

"From all signs it is apparent that the Tyrant is up to his old tricks. I never dreamed he would stoop so low as to take advantage of the mourning days. I am going to the city now to urge the Queen and the King's brother to leave Bakaran at once, no matter how contrary to the accepted custom. Let them observe the mourning at the Court. Keep your eyes open and watch over both the army and those who enter or come out of the city. We are in for some very unpleasant developments."

Having given his instructions the Prince mounted his steed and galloped toward the Tyrant's mansion. Yeznik followed him. He reached the mansion just when the Tyrant and Abbas were ascending the citadel, presumably to inspect Ashot's newly-built castle. In front of the mansion stood a company of guards, awaiting their master's command.

"Where are you going, Sire?" the Prince asked Abbas with a quizzical look.

"By way of a distraction my Uncle asked me to ascend the citadel and inspect his newly-built castle," Abbas replied naively.

"You might accompany us if you wish," the Tyrant interposed sweetly. "I would be highly pleased if Prince Marzpetouni approves of my architectural taste."

"You forget I saw your architectural handiwork when Catholicos Hovhanness had sought refuge there," the Prince replied frostily.

"Doesn't matter. Join us just the same, the season is warm and pleasing," insisted Ashot.

"Illustrious Sire, your castle is beautiful and strong. The Prince of Princes no doubt will approve of it. Still we must respect the Queen's feelings," the Prince objected.

"And what does that mean?" asked Abbas surprised.

"It means we still are in mourning," replied Marzpetouni.

"The living are not buried with the dead, Prince Gevorg," the Tyrant observed with a false smile.

"True enough, but people ordinarily do not forget the dead so quickly."

"Lord Marzpetouni, it's not up to you to give orders to your Chief of Princes; he is your king now," the Tyrant observed sharply.

"Yes, he is my King. Long live Abbas the King of the Armenians!" Marzpetouni took off his helmet and stared at the Tyrant.

"What's the meaning of all this?" Abbas felt that the two antagonists had some secret of which he was not aware.

"Sire, did you ask to ascend the castle?" the Prince asked Abbas without answering his question.

"No. It was my Uncle who suggested the idea and I am grateful to him for his consideration."

"That's right. It was I who suggested it. And now, Prince Marzpetouni, what right have you to make needless ejaculations before my Royal Highness?" The Tyrant was glaring at the Prince.

The latter did not answer, but turning to Abbas said gently:

"Sire, your servant humbly begs you not to go through with this. If you need any distraction from your grief, please let's go to the camp. The banks of the Akhourian river are very pleasant just now. The sun is so warm there."

Before Abbas could reply the Tyrant shouted at the Prince, "Why don't you answer my question, Prince Marzpetouni?"

"Before I answer your question I will ask

you a question of my own. Tell me, why are your troops advancing from Yeraskhadzor to Yeraskhavors?"

"My troops?" the Tyrant was confounded.

"What's the meaning of this?" Abbas asked alarmed.

"The fact of the matter is our host is planning to spring a surprise on us while we sit here cozily," the Prince said icily.

"You lie!" exclaimed the Tyrant.

"It's your 'Royal Highness' who lies," Marzpetouni replied indignantly, losing all patience.

"You dare go that far?" The Tyrant turned to his aide and shouted, "Arrest this scoundrel."

Several guards moved forward to arrest the Prince, but the latter instantly was on guard. "The man is not born," he roared angrily, "who will dare arrest Marzpetouni before killing him." He drew his sword. "Come on, try your prowess, you braves of Bakaran."

The minute Yeznik saw this he flew to his horse and sped to the camp. Meanwhile the guards who were ordered to arrest the Prince stood rooted to the ground.

"What does this mean, illustrious Sire? Is it possible that the scion of the Bagratounis could stoop so low?" Abbas spoke.

"What did you say? Stoop so low? Right in front of my guards?" The Tyrant was furious.

"You are trampling under all the sacred laws of hospitality; you are insulting the memory of the dead King. What other name can I give to your conduct?"

"Are you repeating your insult?"

"I can go farther. You are a traitor," replied Abbas indignantly, then turning to Marzpetouni he commanded:

"Prince, give the Queen my compliments and tell her we will leave here today."

"No one will leave here," the Tyrant rejoined sharply.

"Leaving depends upon our will."

"And the permission depends on us."

"Permission? Are you arresting us?" Abbas was trembling with rage.

"No. You will be my guest for a long time," the Tyrant sneered.

"Was that the reason why you were leading me to your castle, to imprison me there?"

"Yes, if it pleases you to think so."

"This is not mere suspicion. It's the truth. Prince Marzpetouni well surmised your intentions."

"If so, that's the way it's going to be. No one has a right to get out of this mansion. Guards, do your duty." Saying it, he turned his back and headed for the mansion.

"Saul, Saul, it is hard for thee to kick against the prodder." Drawing his sword Abbas intercepted the Tyrant. "Where do you think you are going. Stop and repeat that command. You have no right to insult the heir to the Bagratouni throne. Stop and tell me who you are."

"I am the King of the Armenians and you are my subject," the Tyrant replied and turning to the guards, "Why are you standing still, you scoundrels?"

"That's right. Why are you standing still?" Marzpetouni advanced on them with drawn sword. The latter surrounded him and were trying to disarm him when Abbas joined the fray with drawn sword. "Onward. let's do our duty." The clash of sword and shields and the ensuing tumult was heard in the mansion and presently Abbas' guards rushed to the scene from all sides turning the fray into a regular fight. Fortunately the fight was far from the women's quarters and the Queen and her retinue were safe. However, the conspirators were too many for the defenders and it was a matter of time until Marzpetouni and Abbas would be subdued. Providentially, just as they were about to disarm Marzpetouni the trumpet sounded and Prince Kor's company fell upon the conspirators with drawn swords. Before long the spacious courtyard was filled with

soldiers. New reinforcements arrived and presently the Tyrant's castle was surrounded on all sides. In a glimpse the traitor guards had disappeared, leaving behind a few corpses which the royal troops trampled under.

As to the Tyrant, he had made his escape the minute he heard the sound of the trumpet. Having warded the danger, Marzpetouni and Abbas hastened to the women's quarters and quieted their fears.

"Let us leave this place at once," the Queen urged. "I don't want to have to curse this city where my beloved rests on account of future evils."

"We will leave today, but just give me time enough to arrest this traitor. The snake will sting again as long as his head is not crushed," begged Abbas.

"Leave him alone, dear Abbas. God will punish the guilty. Ashot has sinned against his guests, but the guests should not be ungrateful to their host."

"Why don't you say the traitor?" exclaimed Marzpetouni.

"Call him what you will, but leave him be and let's leave this place," the Queen repeated. The Queen was supported by Lady Gourgendoukhd, and the Princesses Gohar and Shahandoukht and the rest of the ladies of the court, but the guards insisted that the Tyrant be arrested. To prevent future disturbances, Abbas finally yielded to the Queen's wishes. The same night the royal family, accompanied with Abbas and his guards, Marzpetouni and the royal troops left the City of Bakaran for Yerazgavors.

As to those forces of Ashot the Tyrant who at his command had occupied Yerazgavors, when they learned that their master's plans had miscarried and that Abbas and Marzpetouni were marching on the city, they hastily abandoned the place and detoured to Shirakan in order to avoid an encounter with the royal army as they headed for Bakaran.

On their way to Yerazgavors, near a small stream called Romos, the royal army came upon a body of Arab cavalry which likewise was returning from Yerazgavors. Having espied the Armenian army from a distance the Arab cavalry at first tried to escape but upon Marzpetouni's command the royal vanguard gave chase and completely surrounded it. Seeing they were hopelessly outnumbered the Arabs did not even put up a resistance. Upon questioning, their commander told Abbas that they had come to the aid of the King of Bakaran at the command of Emir Nassir, but having been deserted by their allies they were returning to Dovin.

Abbas was so enraged by this revelation that he almost ordered to put to the sword the whole company but Marzpetouni restrained him saying; "God is working with us, Sire. We could not very well break our treaty with the Emir without incurring the anger of the Chief Amira, but now Nassir has broken his word and we are free to attack Dovin. Even the Chief Amira cannot justify his lieutenant's action." Convinced of the wisdom of the Prince's advice, Abbas commanded to disarm the Arabs, seize their horses, and send them back to Dovin on foot. "Go tell the Emir we will soon come and settle his account," he admonished their commander.

Marzpetouni's first act upon arrival at Yerazgavors was to send messengers to Vaspourakan to remind King Gagik of his friendship pact with the King and together with the Catholicos to come to Yerazgavors for the coronation of Abbas. King Gagik pleaded his advanced age and begged Abbas to have the coronation in the old capital of the Artzrunis in Vaspourakan. Furthermore, he argued, his capital would offer him greater security against internal and external foes who might attempt to frustrate the coronation.

Abbas and Marzpetouni having approved of this plan King Gagik at once sent mes-

sengers to all the provinces of Armenia, inviting the princes and the clan chiefs to come to the City of Van and crown Abbas on the throne of the Bagratids. Having heard of Ashot the Tyrant's treachery, the princes immediately responded to the call and without losing time hastened to Van.

In 928, in the magnificent Cathedral of Saint John (Saint Hovhannes) in the City of Van, in the presence of King Gagik and his courtiers, the princes and the dignitaries

of Armenia, Catholicos Theodorus crowned Abbas and Lady Gourgendoukht King and Queen of Armenia. The new King rewarded his princes with gifts and promotions, but the greatest honor he reserved for Prince Marzpetouni, appointing him Commander-in-chief of his armies — a privilege which should be transmitted from generation to generation.

(To be continued)



BOOKS AND AUTHORS

H. Kurdian, Reviewing Editor

AUTHORITY AND LAW IN THE ANCIENT ORIENT. — *Supplement to the Journal of the American Oriental Society. Octavo, paper, pp. 56, 1954. Price \$1.00.*

An informative and textually rich series of articles incorporated in this small volume. The signed articles are "Authority and Law in Ancient Egypt" by John A. Wilson (University of Chicago). In Mesopotamia by E. A. Speiser (Uni. of Pennsylvania). in the Hittite Kingdom by H. G. Guterbock (Uni. of Chicago). In Canaan-Israel by I. Mendelsohn (Columbia University). In India by Daniel H. H. Ingalls (Harvard University). In China by Derk Bodde (Uni. of Penna.) All of it extremely useful for any one who is studying Authority and Law in the Ancient Armenia.

★ ★ ★

MANR JAMANAKGRUTIUNNER XIII-XVIII centuries. Vol. I. edited by V. A. Hakobian. Large octavo, cloth, pp. 454, Erivan (Armenia, USSR) 1951. 28 Rubles.

An interesting and important chronological work composed of various similar tables found in Armenian manuscripts. Mostly by unknown authors. Seem to repeat one another with some small or lengthy additions of local history.

The work is well prepared and amply annotated, and with its complete index it is a must for any one who studies the Armenian history of that period. It is also important for the history of the Turks, Persians, Mongols, Kurds etc., and in many cases perhaps the only source for a great deal of information about them, particularly for their local activities. It is unfortunate that VERY FEW copies (I know of only two, one in my library and one in Beirut, Lebanon) have been received outside of the Iron Curtain, which, for some reason, is very sparing with the exportation of such welcome books but extremely lavish in sending all sort of propagandized trash. This volume naturally can not be considered as exhaustive on the subject. There are many other chronological tables, bits of historical informations that we can find in Armenian manuscripts in various libraries everywhere. However we are grateful that we have this published material from the large collection of Armenian manuscripts accumulated in Erivan State Library which re-

mains out of bounds for those who remain outside of the Iron Curtain.

★ ★ ★

A VISIT TO ARMENIAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION OF BOSTON

On my 1954 journey to Europe and the Near East, while visiting with James Mandalian and others from Hairenik press, I managed to have a short visit with an unusual Armenian by the name of Topalian. I had heard of him but this was my first face-to-face with this remarkable man.

Neat, small and elderly, perhaps in his sixties, quiet in his manners, reserved, and very, VERY, brave as we shall see. After mutual expressions of appreciation for our various works in the field of Armenian culture, he directed me to a quiet and impressive Boston street and stopped in front of a three or four story high building, clean and library like. We entered, it was the Armenian Cultural Center, a very well cared for library.

However, this library which obviously had all sorts of facilities, such as water, electricity, heat, and an amazing neatness and cleanliness observable on its books, shelves, walls, floors, windows, good furniture, study tables etc. According to its keeper, Mr. Topalian did not have any funds or revenues of any sort except some Greek dishwasher's monthly donation of some \$50 or \$100.00. A highly cultured and kind Boston judge had exempted the library from taxes.

Mr. Topalian informed me that he was the furnace tender, floor cleaner, duster, janitor as well as the well-informed librarian of this unique library. the only one so complete and so useful in U. S. A. Seldom visitors spend few minutes to visit the well furnished library, still more seldom, any one avails himself of its excellent books, and practically no one ever bothers to think and do something about the financial needs of the building, the library of the librarian. He seemed to have resigned himself to sleep in a very small room in the library, eat whenever it was possible, and count pennies all the time. However he still was brave enough to make additions to his books by purchasing manuscripts and manuscript letters of titans like Victor Hugo, Emil Zola, and many many others. Topalian's room on that cold day I visited was uncomfortable with chill . . . but the rest of the library seemed more or less heated. "I can not afford the luxury of heating my room, he said, "but the rest of the building has to be

heated, otherwise water pipes will freeze and bust."

Mr. Topalian, formerly a tailor I believe, was an avid book collector. Eventually an intelligent and kind Jewish lady advanced him enough money to purchase this building which originally was built for an archive and library. Thus the library became established and has been functioning for years.

This little but heroic Armenian, book lover Topalian, altho cold and perhaps hungry, rebels against any, and I mean ANY charity, for himself or for his institution. He may complain even for the postage he may spend for a letter or a book he sends but no one should dare to approach him with charity.

Still . . . the Armenians all over the U. S. as well as in Boston should do something to save this great and good Armenian and the wonderful library from any mishap. He should be given the tools with which he would complete the work he has started.

A fund should be collected or a trust should be formed to help him perpetuate his very fine and useful work. He should be able to heat his room as well as the library, to ward off the paralyzing numbness from cold so he can bring this fantastic collection of Armenian books in Boston, U. S. A. up to date.

There are Armenians who could do something. There must be some Armenians who WOULD do something.

★ ★ ★

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION OF DR. ALFRED CHESTER BEATTY

At each of my visits to Dublin, Eire, I wanted to have a chance to see the famous manuscript collection of this internationally well-known great collector. Finally in 1954 I had the chance to see his collection. It was indeed a great pleasure which I owe to the kindness of Mr. Wilkinson the librarian of Mr. Beatty's newly built modern Library in Dublin (20 Shrewsbury Road).

Mr. Beatty's library, ideally situated and ideally furnished, contains such a wealth of manuscripts that it requires great deal more space than we have here to be superficially sketched. During my first visit, besides making the very pleasant acquaintance of Mr. Wilkinson, I had the honor and the pleasure of meeting Mr. W. Merton who is a collector of manuscripts himself, a good friend of Mr. Beatty and the publisher of the privately printed catalogues of Mr. Beatty's rare manuscripts. The collection, among other great rarities, contains some 40 Armenian manuscripts of importance to Armenian culture, history, miniatures, etc. The catalogue of Armenian manuscripts was under the press. The catalogue was prepared by the eminent authority on Byzantine Art, the well-known scholar Miss Sirarpir Der Nersessian.

Unfortunately Mr. Beatty was in Europe during my first visit. On my return from the Near East I again stopped in Dublin, as I intended to see Mr. Merton and Mr. Wilkinson, to take additional notes on some of the Beatty manuscripts. The morning of my arrival I phoned Mr. Merton's residence and was shocked to hear from Mrs. Merton that Mr. Merton was taken ill with some

heart ailment. However Mrs. Merton kindly informed me that Mr. Beatty was at home in Dublin, and that he expected to hear from me. I phoned Mr. Beatty and he kindly invited me to tea the next afternoon. I had a most pleasant visit that afternoon, greatly profiting from Mr. Beatty's vast knowledge and memory. Altho well advanced in years and bravely fighting the discomforts of some illness contracted in his mining career, and naturally aggravated by years (he had suffered 16 times from some sort of pneumonia he told me), he invited me to lunch the next day again, and the day before my departure he made an appointment to see me at his library. Mr. Beatty has many recollections that will interest the Armenians, due to his international financial, engineering and economic activities. A personal friend of our great President Herbert Hoover, of Galust Gulbenkian and others, Dr. Alfred Chester Beatty, F. S. A., LL.D., D.Sc. was born in New York in 1875, soon became an international figure of importance in mining, and amassed a huge fortune. However, he liberally used his wealth to accumulate one of the greatest private collections of artistic manuscripts, amongst which he has some very important Armenian manuscripts. His great collection for instance contains not one but THREE manuscripts from the pen and brush of the renowned Armenian calligrapher and miniaturist Sarkis Bidzag (XIII century). As soon as I received his catalogue which he graciously promised to send, I will present his Armenian Collection to my readers here.

★ ★ ★

ARSHAK TCHOBANIAN PASSES AWAY

It is hard to believe that a freak accident could down this indefatigable Armenian poet, writer, editor, traveler, speaker and the most distinguished public relations man for his beloved Armenian nation.

A taxi cab struck him down in Paris, France, Thursday 8th of June 1954, about 2:30 P.M., and before he reached the hospital the venerable and well-liked Tchobanian, had passed away, to the great sorrow of the whole Armenian nation in the Dispersion. He was well liked by all parties and classes. He was born in Constantinople (Beshiktash) in July 15, 1872. His father Hovanness, an able goldsmith, belonged to a famous old Armenian family of Akin. Young Arshak, educated at the foot of capable Armenian writers, had an early beginning in Armenian literature through his translations of great French writers and by authoring Armenian short stories and novels. In 1893 he came to Paris and remained in his second or adopted fatherland until he died. He made trips to Armenia and the United States. Was in close contact with French writers, journalists and politicians. He was editor and publisher of a popular periodical *Anabid*, and published many fine collections of early great Armenian poets in Armenian and French. His masterpiece among them no doubt will remain the "Hav Etcher" (Pages of Armenian art). Then his "Nahabed Kutchak" and his "Hay'tennerou Pourastan", altho not scholarly but very popularly compiled, has been received well. His three volumes of "La Roserie D'Armenie" are very important, with his

first hand fine translations of Armenian ancient poetry, for all those who would like to know about Armenian poetic creative ability. Of course many other fine works from his pen in book form, as articles, speeches, poems are published and still a great deal of material remains unpublished. He received honors from the French (Officer of Legion D'Honore) and the Roumanian government, while the so-called Armenian Government of Erivan heaped false and dastardly accusations against this devoted Armenophile who for a life time did all but shed his blood for his people and for Armenia.

I first met him in early twenties in New York. Then we kept corresponding and I became one of cowriters of "Anahid" during the second period of that monthly publication. I visited him every time I happened to be in Paris. Our relations were based on mutual understanding and respect to the end. I have a voluminous correspondence from him. Many of his letters show his sensitive nature, susceptible to verbal darts aimed against him by small people.

Tchobanian was a sort of unofficial prime minister of Armenians in Paris, always ready to help. Altho financially unsuccessful and always in need of funds, whenever seldom-appearing Armenian generosity reimbursed him during his jubilees, he used every cent he ever received in printing his beloved periodical Anahid.

Unmarried, he lived in an apartment in a modest house on a modest street in Paris. Any one

visiting him would have been hard pressed to make his way through the book, magazine and paper cluttered rooms, and always books and magazines had to be displaced so one could find enough space on a seat to rest from his hike to sad and quiet Rue Say. No doubt there would be a wealth of books, correspondence, unpublished material accumulated for more than half century; it would take a Job-like patient person to arrange and cleanly classify the enormous pile. A job that I would have loved to do if I were younger and if I lived in Paris.

So now, Tchobanian is gone. The last time I saw him was in March 1954 in Paris. He was quite old and worn out, altho he never forgave any one who ever made a remark about him being old. I still can see him slumped in a rickety chair at the Arax printing plant. I hope I was wrong, but to me, at the time, he looked like some one who was waiting . . . waiting. . .

And then a French taxi . . . perhaps an old and worn taxi, ran him down . . . and Tchobanian passed away. He only could pass away like a man that had done his work well, with devotion, with all his heart . . . and knowing that there was nothing else but wait and Tchobanian was waiting . . . until death in a Paris taxi struck him down. . .

But all Armenians will remember him gratefully for his fine work, teaching us not only to be proud, but to love our culture and our priceless heritage which has survived time, nature and man.



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STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC. REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912

OF ARMENIAN REVIEW

Boston, Massachusetts, March 1, 1945

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid personally appeared Armen Vahe, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the BUSINESS MANAGER of the ARMENIAN REVIEW and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411 Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are:

Publisher—Hairenik Association, Inc. 212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.

Editor—R. Darbinian 212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.

Managing Editor—R. Darbinian 212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.

Business Manager—Armen Vahe 212 Stuart Street, Boston, Mass.

Dr. L. K. Daghljan

Sec., M. Ozanian

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2. That the owner is:

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3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (None).

This corporation has no stockholders or bondholders.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

Business Manager—ARMEN VAHE

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 15th day of March, 1955

SERAN DESDEGULE

(Notary Public)

Seal

(My commission expires Aug. 31, 1956)

